

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE AND
DRAMATIC TECHNIQUE

By
FRANK B. FIELER

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PREFACE

In Tamburlaine, Part I, Christopher Marlowe took a known historical personage who was morally despicable by the standards of the sixteenth century, and, without falsifying the historical portrait, presented him in a way designed to evoke admiration in the audience. This design involved an elaborate plan of apotheosis which persists throughout the play and, in some way, affects every element of the play's structure. At the same time, he attempted to persuade the audience not to leave the theatre with an uncritical acceptance of the hero's career as an ideal to be taken as a model. The existence of such an extensive plan suggests that, in addition to his having been an iconoclastic, lyrical poet of great powers, he was an eminently conscious dramatist, who in the process of composition was aware, at all times, of the interaction between his material and his audience, and who had the necessary ability and knowledge of his craft demanded by the constant control over material and audience reaction which is exhibited in Tamburlaine, Part I.

To support these assertions, the first part of this study discusses the problems which the selection of Tamburlaine as the subject of a play presented to the dramatist, and it investigates the means by which he resolved these problems and achieved that particular tense effect between exhilaration and aversion the character of Tamburlaine has upon an audience, be it Elizabethan or modern.

Tamburlaine, Part II, an entirely different type of play and the first of its kind on the Elizabethan stage, exhibits the same care in

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plotting and design as its predecessor. Though not, perhaps, the dramatic success which Tamburlaine, Part I is, the sequel is a technical triumph of high importance for succeeding English drama. The final half of this study examines the technique of Tamburlaine, Part II. In view of the fact that Marlowe stands chronologically at the beginning of the greatest period of dramatic genius the English language has ever known, such a study of dramatic technique in his earliest plays seem desirable and even necessary if we are ever to evaluate properly his achievement as a dramatist and his contribution to the development of English drama.

✓ [Certainly, a study of dramatic technique in Marlowe's two earliest plays does not tell the whole story of his contribution or his achievement. In his later plays he both improves upon the experimental devices found in the plays on Tamburlaine and devises new techniques for new situations; however, Marlowe's earliest dramatic efforts do offer abundant proof of a most important aspect characteristic of his technique throughout his career, namely, a consistently conscious attention to the effect upon the audience of virtually every word he wrote.] Contrary to the widely held notions that he was primarily a subjective artist or at best a great lyric poet who had the misfortune to be born in an age when the stage offered the most rewards for a writer, [Marlowe was a carefully objective writer who better understood the art of dramatic writing than any of his Elizabethan predecessors, and who put that knowledge advantageously to work in his plays.] It is, perhaps, a weakness of the present study that it does not deal with the dramatic technique of Marlowe's immediate predecessors in the English drama. If it had done so, Marlowe's innovations in technique could have been

presented with much more impressive force; that is, however, a subject for future study.

The text used throughout this study is that of Tamburlaine The Great, edited by Una Ellis-Fermor (2nd ed. rev.; London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1951). The two occasions on which Tucker Brooke's edition (The Works of Christopher Marlowe. Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1910) is used are properly noted.

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I

The picture presented in the following pages of the dramatist's method of composition and use of dramatic device is considerably different from that which is contained in, or implied by, previous Marlowe scholarship. Criticism of Tamburlaine, Part I has seldom gone beyond its two most sensational elements--its poetry and its ideas. Until a few decades ago, it was popular among scholars to consider the Marlowe of Tamburlaine, Part I as the supreme example of Renaissance man asserting his freedom and individuality, in a series of gorgeous purple passages, the lyrical heights of which had never been approximated before and seldom equaled since. The dramatist was usually identified with the main character, who existed only as a thinly disguised mouthpiece for Marlowe's own noble ambition. Miss Ellis-Fermor's is typical of this rather romantic interpretation:

It is the drama of confidence stretching to such dazzling heights that we forget the wise saws and maxims of mediocrity, and are bewildered into believing with Marlowe that what has never been achieved is by no means therefore unachievable. 'I throw my mind across the chasm' said the Indian hunter, 'and my horse follows.' That is Marlowe's spirit. The barriers between the possible and impossible are down. There is but one absolute measure of all phenomena--the human will. And, curiously, in the crevices of our beings, there is something that still recognizes this for essential truth and all other records of experience for accidents. Such is the response we make to the appeal of Tamburlaine.¹

¹Una Mary Ellis-Fermor, Christopher Marlowe (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1927), p. 25.

Of course, the main fallacy here as with other instances of this approach is that the critic is viewing the play through the eyes of a modern to whom ambition is a noble passion, rather than through the eyes of an Elizabethan. Such a point of view, except for what is suggested by the usual encomiums upon the poetical power of the lines, naturally tends to suggest that the phenomenon of Tamburlaine's acceptance by an audience is too obvious to need explanation. An emphasis exclusively upon noble thoughts and powerful poetry implies that Tamburlaine, Part I was written entirely as a result of "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings," without a prior plan, purpose, or organization.

The current approach to Marlowe criticism, as evidenced in the work of Boas, Kocher, Poirier, and Henderson, has corrected errors of earlier writers regarding the ideas in the play. These critics observe in a cold, objective fashion the "heights" which dazzled the earlier critics, but they are nevertheless still preoccupied by them. The only difference is that expressions which before were interpreted as noble, are now interpreted as unlawful. As before, Tamburlaine is considered only as a mouthpiece for Marlowe's ideas. For example, Boas speaks of Tamburlaine as "throbbing with a stupendous vitality that made him the fitting mouthpiece of the dramatist's own tumultuous energies and aspirations."²

With these critics there is little distinction made between dramatist and dramatic character. Their interest in the play lies

²Frederick S. Boas, Christopher Marlowe: A Biographical and Critical Study (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940), p. 76.

primarily in what can be inferred about Marlowe's personality. The boundaries between drama and biography are forgotten:

If he took up the pen, it was above all to satisfy the need of expressing his profound aspirations. Whilst he attempts to realize his ambition in real life, it makes it at the same time the plaything of his imagination, which enlarges it out of all proportions. Plays such as Tamburlaine, Doctor Faustus, and even The Massacre at Paris are day-dreams of their maker's great desires.³

Once the critic becomes interested primarily in biographical correspondences to the exclusion of literary elements, it is easy to see that the next step is to deny Marlowe's plays any claims of being art. Indeed, statements have already been made that Marlowe is no conscious artist:

With egotism as his first and last principle, Marlowe has no other interest but the worship and expansion of his personality.⁴

There is in effect only one character in the drama, and that is Tamburlaine, who is fundamentally Marlowe. The other characters awake to temporary life only when they become like Tamburlaine. . . . In brief, Marlowe is here not a creator of character but a recorder of his own inner experience, which he distributes among his dramatis personae without transmuting and individualizing it as a dramatist should.⁵

Ever since it was realized that Tamburlaine was basically unlawful in the eyes of the Elizabethans, there have been attempts to explain the paradox of his acceptance. However, in every case this phenomenon

³Michel Poirier, Christopher Marlowe (London: Chatto and Windus, 1951), p. 44.

⁴Poirier, p. 44.

⁵Paul H. Kocher, Christopher Marlowe, A Study of His Thought, Learning, and Character (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1946), p. 304.

of acceptance has been misunderstood. The explanations are always brief and virtually without evidence, as if obvious enough not to require any, although the explanations show variation among themselves. Some typical examples will illustrate this clearly:

. . . through the magnetism that he exerts, and through the high astounding terms of his proclamations, his figure swells to more and more stupendous proportions. The panegyric on his physical attributes. . . .⁶

As a justification of his conquests and the utter ruthlessness with which they are pursued, Tamburlaine, drawing up a familiar Renaissance conception, tells us that he is the appointed Scourge of God and is therefore obliged to fulfill this terrible function.⁷

Poirier sees no design at all behind the acceptance and, [referring to the magnificence of spectacle, rich apparel, flags, sounds of drums and trumpets, and stage violence, attributes the effect of Tamburlaine to Marlowe's appeal "to the more ignoble instincts of the audience."⁸]

In the succeeding pages, I hope to show quite conclusively that such explanations contain only half-truths and over-simplifications, and that in respect to his design for gaining acceptance for Tamburlaine, Marlowe has been misunderstood and underestimated.

On the other hand, the poetry of the play has been overemphasized in its effect upon the audience's reactions to Tamburlaine. There are hardly any commentators who do not emphasize the part played by the poetry, and perhaps this explains, in part, the fragmentary quality of

⁶Boas, p. 78.

⁷Philip Henderson, Christopher Marlowe (London: Longmans, Green and Co., Ltd., 1952), p. 88.

⁸Poirier, p. 99.

the explanations quoted above. The power of the poetry is praised throughout all the interpretations. C. S. Lewis serves to illustrate the way in which the poetry is exalted above every other element:

The characters . . . are as dwarfed by their own poetry as a circus-master by his own elephant. We forget Tamburlaine . . . and think only of Rhodope and Persepolis and celestial spheres and spirits. . . . The trochaic in 'What is beautie' matters more than the whole pretence of drama which is crawling about, down on the stage, fathoms below this region: like a tragedy about beetles.⁹

Undoubtedly, the poetry does play a large part in the audience's acceptance of Tamburlaine, but it is only a part of Marlowe's overall scheme and, to a great extent, is dependent for its effect upon more basic devices of which Marlowe made use.]

The foregoing sketch of the state of criticism in relation to Tamburlaine, Part I mirrors the two modern trends in Marlowe criticism in general. The critic's point of view is almost always centered upon either the unlawful ideas contained in the play in relation to the dramatist's own personal character, or upon the beauty and power of the poetry. There are few dramatists of any consequence whose dramaturgy per se has been more consistently ignored.]

It takes more to make a play than a poet with some iconoclastic ideas; it also requires a subject (or plot) and an awareness of an audience.] Marlovian critics seem to have forgotten this. Problems which are inherent in the relationship between the specific subject and the

⁹C. S. Lewis, English Literature in the Sixteenth Century (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954), p. 481.

audience, and which Marlowe had to resolve in order to achieve his overall intention in the play, are either ignored or treated in such a desultory fashion that their importance in the final result is made to seem almost nonexistent. Yet it is upon the resolution of such problems that the entire structure and the ultimate success of the dramatist's intentions rest. And, in the final analysis, it is upon his ability to resolve these problems in a proper fashion that his control over his art depends.

II

The original of Marlowe's Tamburlaine was an actual historical personage, Timur the Lame (1336-1405), the great Tartar conqueror who, in 1402, met and defeated Bajazeth, the head of the Turkish Empire, at Ancara, in Bithynia. His defeat of the Turk was widely considered by Christian historians and moralists during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries as an act of God, for Bajazeth was at the time subjecting Constantinople to a terrible siege, and had it not been for the sudden appearance of Timur, that city most certainly would have fallen into the hands of the Turks almost fifty years earlier than it eventually did fall. Judging from the number of accounts available to English readers during the latter half of the sixteenth century, the events of Timur's career must have been fairly well known. In addition to numerous accounts in French, Italian, Spanish, and Latin, which could have been circulating in England, there were at least six books published in England in the twenty-five years immediately preceding the writing of Marlowe's play containing accounts of Timur's life.¹

¹Two very notable Commentaries the one of the original of the Turkes by Andrewe Cambine . . . translated oute of Italian into English by John Shute. London. 1562; The Foreste or Collection of Histories . . . done oute of Frenche into Englishe by Thomas Fortescue. 1571; A Notable History of the Saracens, . . . Drawen out of Augustine Curio and Sundry other good Authors by Thomas Newton. 1575; Navigations made into Turquie by Nicholas Nicholay. 1585; The French Academy . . . by Peter de la Primaudaye . . . translated into English by T. B. 1586; and George Whetstone, The English Myrror. 1586.

Marlowe's immediate sources seem to have been the descriptions found in Thomas Fortescue's The Foreste (1571), George Whetstone's English Myrror (1586), and a Latin version, Magni Tamerlanis vita (1553), by Petrus Perondinus.² Being the most complete accounts in English up to that time and differing from the earlier ones only by length and fullness of narrative, the first two give us what could be considered as the popular contemporary ideas about the historical Timur and his career. Both Fortescue and Whetstone's accounts are translations of that found in Pedro Mexia's Silva de varia lection (1542), and thus have practically identical narratives.

Timur, or Tamburlaine, as the name already had been erroneously translated, was born of poor parents in Scythia and in his youth had been a shepherd. One day, in play, his young friends elected him their leader, but, having fostered desires for glory in his mind for some time, Tamburlaine persuaded his friends to subject themselves to his authority in earnest, to leave their servile trades, and to follow a life of war with him. He began leading them in robbing merchants and caravans traveling through that part of the country. His success in these activities, combined with an unquestionable ability for leadership and a habit of treating his followers in a fair, liberal, and courteous

²See pp. 34-41 of the Introduction to the Ellis-Fermor edition for a complete summary of the scholarship to date on Marlowe's sources. The claim for Perondinus lies in the fact that he is the only source for the suicide of Bajazeth. Also, his characterization of the conqueror as an unpitying, all-victorious, all-destructive, and supremely self-confident despot, driven on by both an insatiable love of arms and a merciless desire for sovereignty coincides more closely with Marlowe's conception of the character than does any other account.

manner, drew more and more volunteers for his band from the neighboring countryside. As his strength grew in numbers, so the scope of his undertakings became progressively more ambitious, until the king of Persia, hearing of his activities, sent a thousand horsemen under the conduct of one of his captains to apprehend the thieves. This captain, however, overwhelmed by the Scythian's personal manner, offered his services and those of his entire troop to him. In the meantime, discord sprang up between the king and the king's brother. Tamburlaine joined with the latter and was in a large measure responsible for the king's defeat. Having helped to crown the brother, Tamburlaine was made general of the greater part of the Persian army, and after gathering recruits under the pretext of going to war with neighbouring provinces, he revolted, deposed the new monarch, and crowned himself. He then set out with his army to conquer other countries. After an uninterrupted number of victories, he met and defeated Bajazeth, the emperor of the Turks, in the most important engagement of his military career. Having captured the Turk, Tamburlaine kept him locked in a cage, fed him with crumbs and scraps from his table, and used him as a footstool when mounting his horse.

Tamburlaine continued his march of conquest until his empire included virtually all of Asia Minor and northeastern Africa. It was his habit in assaulting a city to raise a white tent on the first day of the siege to signify to the inhabitants that if they surrendered immediately, they would be mercifully treated. When they did not yield, he raised a red tent on the second day, signifying that he would kill only their leaders and the head of each household. If they did not surrender on

the second day, he then raised a black tent to signify that he would kill every inhabitant without respect to age or sex, and sack and burn the city.

Once, when he was besieging a rich city, a group of women and children, dressed in white and bearing olive branches, came forth on the third day to beg mercy of him. Instead of feeling compassion for them, he had his horsemen overrun them, and when he was asked why he had been so merciless, Tamburlaine answered that he was the wrath and vengeance of God, and the ruin of the world. After many more victories, he went back to his own country, which he ruled wisely until his natural death. He left two sons who eventually lost their father's great empire to the sons of Bajazeth.

This then was the story of the Tartar conqueror who had momentarily saved Constantinople from falling into the hands of the Turks, as it was known to the Elizabethans. By choosing to dramatize such a story, Marlowe was faced with having to take into consideration in his treatment the effect the story already had upon his contemporaries and the connotations connected with the name of Tamburlaine. Every generation has a set of moral and ethical standards with which it automatically measures a man's actions or thoughts. We cannot read a newspaper article without making some judgment about the action or ideas contained therein. This does not necessarily mean that these standards are those by which we completely govern our own actions. On the contrary, it is probable that in the majority of cases, the standards by which we make moral judgments and those by which we ourselves act are things quite different;

nor are we much concerned over this difference between theory and practice--it does not seem at all unnatural. For example, take a businessman who is usually ruthless in dealing with his competitors. Attending a play, he has no trouble recognizing the unethical practices of the villain, a ruthless businessman like himself, and his sense of justice is outraged if the highly ethical, hard working young hero does not emerge successful by the end of the play. Yet this same businessman feels no need to change his own practices once he has left the theatre. The point is that no matter who the individual spectator or what his own practice, the dramatist can rely upon definite standards of value to make clear his characterizations to the entire audience.

So, too, the Elizabethans had common moral standards which, even though their own actions did not always conform to them, were brought to bear upon the actions of others, particularly in literature and history where moral judgments are more-or-less invited. By the time Marlowe took in hand the story of Tamburlaine, it had already been arraigned before this bar of judgment and had a common moral character passed upon it.

Underlying all Elizabethan thinking was the idea of cosmic order. Broadly speaking, this order was thought of as the principle by which everything in the cosmos was related and joined together into one comprehensive whole. All creation was related in a vertical chain. Among the elements, earth was the lowest, being the heaviest; water, being lighter, was above the earth; air was naturally above water; and it follows that fire was the highest of all. The spheres of heaven were

arranged in a descending order "from the uttermost empyrean to the earth in the center of all."³ The world of living creatures was arranged in what was thought of as a hierarchy of souls. At the bottom were the inanimate objects like stones, which contain no life, but merely have the faculty for existing. Above them are plants, which possess the simplest kind of soul; they are able to grow and reproduce. In the next rank are the animals, which, in addition to the nutritive soul of the plants, have the power of sense; not only can they grow and reproduce, but they also have the use of the five senses and, to some extent, the faculty of imagination. Above the animals is man, whose soul is not only nutritive and sensitive but also rational. In the next rank are the angels, who are pure intellect and are able to know universal truth without the use of the senses. Above the angels is God, who contains all possibility.

Each rank among living things is broken down into varying degrees, so that nowhere are there two beings or creatures that are equal. Every creature from the lowest worm to the highest angel has its distinct place in this chain of being and its own individual function in the scheme of things. The smooth functioning of the whole rested upon each individual creature's completing its own job properly. And over all this order ruled God, who had created it and by whose laws it operated.

Such a comprehensive, Divinely instituted order made the universe seem comforting and friendly to its inhabitants. Each thing or person had a definite place in the scheme of things and interrelations

³Hardin Craig, The Enchanted Glass (New York: Oxford University Press, 1936), p. 11.

between them were fixed. It was possible to disrupt this order, but possible only by a sin horrible to behold, for any disarrangement was an act of injustice not only to God, its architect, but also to every participant in this order, both animate and inanimate. Clearly, Tamburlaine was a violent enemy of the Divine scheme. Born a shepherd, he purposely and viciously stepped out of his natural appointed place. If Marlowe were to present the Scythian as disrupting order merely by the operation of his ambition, he was to present a person despicable and vile, an enemy to all that was comforting and friendly to the rest of creation, a conscienceless tyrant who was prepared to sacrifice the peace and happiness of all creation to gratify his own desires.

As the Elizabethans firmly believed in this order underlying everything in the universe, so they were terrified at what might happen if it were upset. They were obsessed by the fear of chaos: "Take away ordre from all thynges what shulde than remayne? Certes nothyng finally, except some man wolde imagine eftsones Chaos. . . ." ⁴ Richard Hooker warns, "Let any principal thing, as the sun, the moon, any one of the heavens or elements, but once cease or fail, or swerve, and who doth not easily conceive that the sequel therof would be ruin both to itself and what soever dependeth on it." ⁵ The homilist describes the dire effects of upsetting the social order:

⁴Sir Thomas Elyot, The Boke Named the Governour ("Everyman Library;" London: J. M. Dent & Co., 1907), p. 3.

⁵Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity (2 Vols.; "Everyman Library;" London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1954), I, Book I, 185.

For where there is no right order, there reigneth all abuse, carnal liberty, enormity, sinn, and Babylonical confusion. Take away Kings, Princes, Rulers, Magistrates, Judges, and such estates of Gods order, no man shall ride or go by the high way unrobbed, no man shall sleep in his own house or bed unkilld, no man shall keep his wife, children and possession in quietness, all things shall be common, and there must needs follow all mischief, and utter destruction both of souls, bodies, goods and Common-wealths.⁶

The Elizabethans who first witnessed Tamburlaine had thus been thoroughly trained to fear any disturbance in what was for them the "stay of the world."

Natural order in society meant that kings and noblemen, being superior in the hierarchy, had superior powers of mind and soul and should therefore govern all those of an inferior nature. This is their duty within the social sphere. And since they are ordained by God to their positions, they are to be obeyed by those under them, and not have their authority repeatedly flouted by a man like Tamburlaine because their desires run at cross purposes with his own. Besides the Law of Nature, the Bible also made it clear that kings were to be honored and obeyed. In the thirteenth chapter of Saint Paul's epistle to the Romans, the Elizabethans found explicit proof that they were in duty bound to obey the king and other legal officers who were over them. The following is taken from the homily on Disobedience and Wilful Rebellion:

Let us learn of Saint Paul the chosen vessal of God, that all persons having souls (he excepteth none, nor exempteth none,

⁶Certayne Sermons or Homilies, oppoynted by the Kyniges Maiestie to be declared, and redde by all Persones, Vicars, or Curates, euery Sundaye in their Churches, where they haue cure. Quoted from Alfred Hunt, Shakespeare and the Homilies (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1934), p. 34.

neither Priest, Apostle, nor Prophet, saith S. Chrysostom) do owe of Bounden duty, and even in conscience, obedience, submission and subjection to the high powers, which be set in authority by God, for as much as they be Gods Lieutenants, Gods Presidents, Gods Officers, Gods Commissioners, Gods Judges, ordained of God himself, of whom only they have all their power, and all their authority. And the same S. Paul threateneth no less pain, than everlasting damnation to all disobedient persons, to all resisters against the general and common authority, for as much as they resist not man but God, nor mans device, and invention, but Gods wisdom, Gods Order, Power, and Authority.⁷

Disobedience to authority, then, was theoretically disobedience to God. And Elizabeth was careful to keep her subjects aware of this, for she constantly insisted in her speeches and public documents that she was God's Vicegerent in the kingdom and was directly under His blessing. Those who rebel in this system commit a crime not only against the state, but against God's own power, and against the Law of Nature. The subject cannot rebel against his sovereign under any circumstances, even tyranny and oppression, because God has His purposes in everything and it is not for man to attempt to change His means:

. . . whether the prince be wicked, or godlye, hee is sent of GOD, because the Apostle saith: There is no power but of GOD. If the prince be a godlye prince, then is hee sent as a great blessing from GOD, and if hee be a tyrant, then is he raised of GOD for a scourge to the people for their sinnes. And therefore whether the prince be the one, or the other, he is to be obeyed as before.⁸

Thus, the subject has no right whatever to unseat his prince. His only recourse in the face of oppression is to pray to God that He will remove

⁷Quoted by Hart, pp. 37-38.

⁸Philip Stubbes, Anatomy of the Abuses in England, Part II (ed. F. J. Furnivall; London: New Shakspeare Society, Ser. VI, No. 12, 1882), p. 18.

the tyrant by Divine intervention. No matter how many wrongs are heaped upon him, the subject who attempts to unseat his sovereign purchases eternal damnation. Of course, this applies to all other situations in society concerning the relations between superior and inferior.

✓ For the same reasons, [ambition was thought of as a most terrible sin. Attempting to raise one's social position was almost as bad as attempting to dethrone a king; in each case the social order was being disrupted.] The Elizabethans were understandably suspicious of anyone showing signs of social ambition. In a society whose system of moral philosophy rested upon the Law of Nature which told them that all parts work for the good of the whole, it is not surprising that anyone showing signs of individualism should be considered subversive to society. Theoretically, if a person were thinking of the good of society as a whole, he would never desert the place he had been assigned by nature. Also, the very fact that he was attempting to change the position God had assigned him was a direct insult to the Creator's wisdom:

O man! who arte thou, that reasonest with thy Creator? shall the clay say vnto the potter, why hast thou made me thus? Or can the clay make himselfe better fauored than the potter, who gaue him his first stamp & proportion? Shall we think that stinking pride can make the workmanshippe of the Lord to seeme fayrer?⁹

Marlowe was perfectly aware of this extension of the theory to the rebel's relation to God. If we follow the references to Jove in the play, we see Tamburlaine's egotism progressively multiply to the point

⁹Philip Stubbes, Anatomy of the Abuses in England, Part I (ed. F. J. Furnivall; London: New Shakspeare Society, Ser. VI, No. 4, 1877), p. 40.

where, in the final act, he fancies himself so powerful that a "pale and wan" Jove fears that Tamburlaine will "pull him from his throne" (V.ii. 390-391).

Man should be content with the position in life which God has given him, for if it were better for society that he were placed in some other position, God would have put him there originally. Although in itself sinful, it was not the mere fact of a person being ambitious that the Elizabethans feared; they were disturbed with the evils which were attendant upon such a passion. Experience had too often taught them that an ambitious person, if he could not achieve his desires by lawful means, would not hesitate to use force and violence, sometimes to the extent of enlisting the aid of the ignorant multitude, under false pretences, to prevail against lawful authority, as the historical Tamburlaine did when he gathered recruits in Persia under the authority of the king on the pretext of going to war with neighbouring countries, when in reality he was planning to use them to gain the crown for himself.

If nothing had been known of the historical Tamburlaine except that he had rebelled against his rightful monarch and raised himself from shepherd to world-feared conqueror, he would have been roundly denounced by conventional Elizabethan moralists. But the extent of Tamburlaine's unlawfulness went much farther, and Marlowe's problem of presenting him in a desirable light was commensurably greater. To understand the full moral implications of the historical Tamburlaine's acts, we must proceed with this discussion of Elizabethan standards of conduct.

It is convenient to resume our discussion by asking what is the purpose for man's existence. Nearly every writer during the sixteenth century agreed that man was made in order to know and love God.¹⁰ In order to fulfill this duty man had to observe and describe the Law of Nature in operation in the universe, because to know God, one had to know His works. By knowing His works, one could learn the nature of man, for whom all these works were made. Man understands the Law of Nature through the use of his distinguishing faculty, reason. Being the link between the world of sense and the world of intellect, he contains parts of both worlds. Through his animal part, he is presented images or perceptions by his senses from which, by the use of reason, he abstracts universal and eternal truths (the power of being able to know universals is part of his spiritual nature). One of the first truths he perceives in this manner is that God is perfect and all other things have some capacity for approaching perfection. They all have the power of becoming something that they are not yet. Because of this, they have a desire to become as perfect as they are by nature able; which perfection is generally known as "goodness," and is achieved by "proceeding in the knowledge of truth, and by growing in the exercise of virtue. . . ."¹¹ Tamburlaine's belief that the highest perfection of which man is capable resides in his ability to achieve the "sweet fruition of an earthly crown" (II.vii.29) was thus not only heretical, but illogical.

¹⁰Theodore Spencer, Shakespeare and the Nature of Man (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1942), pp. 1-4.

¹¹Hooker, I, Book I, 165.

Man attains truth through revelation or through reason or both. The main source of revelation was, of course, the Bible; and since it was written down in black and white, man had only to read it. But in this age when the world was changing daily and life was becoming progressively more complicated, the Bible seemed to be limited for the complete ordering of one's daily activities; and so men of the sixteenth century began to lean more heavily upon the Law of Nature or Reason, applying what they saw in the external world to their own particular domain, to such an extent that Professor Kelso, in her study of sixteenth century social theories, can make the statement that "the law of nature was in other words the absolute standard of goodness."¹² "Goodness is seen with the eye of the understanding," says Hooker. "And the light of that eye, is reason."¹³

Men found in the classical virtues of justice, prudence, fortitude, and temperance, ideals of conduct which could be used in daily activities. Justice was conceived as the basic guide of men in their relations with each other. In its simplest form justice meant to "give every man his own." Man's first duty in justice was to give God his due, which is to admit that all his accomplishments are a result of God's goodness, for "there is no kind of faculty or power in man or any other creature, which can rightly perform the functions allotted to it,

¹²Ruth Kelso, The Doctrine of the English Gentleman in the Sixteenth Century ("University of Illinois Studies in Language and Literature;" Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1929), p. 100.

¹³Hooker, I, Book I, 170.

without perpetual aid and concurrence of the Supreme Cause of all things."¹⁴ Thus pride is a transgression of justice. Regarding men, everyone, of whatever degree, had rights which were to be respected by all. Elyot even has a chapter entitled "That iustice aught to be betwene enemyes."¹⁵ [Applied to war, the Elizabethan doctrine of justice denied a ruler the right to attack another country without provocation. Any war which had as its sole purpose the acquisition of another's lands or goods was unlawful.] Among Lord Burghley's precepts to his son, we find the advice not to bring up his children to be professional soldiers, because a soldier can hardly be an honest man or a good Christian, every war in itself being unjust though the good cause may make it lawful. George Gascoigne, an ex-soldier himself, advises in "The Fruits of War,"

O prince, be pleas'd with thine own diadem;
 Confine thy countries with their common bounds;
 Enlarge no land, ne stretch thou not thy stream;

 Lest thine own sword be cause of all thy wounds;
 Claim not by war where title is not good.¹⁶

The application of this precept to Tamburlaine's dependence upon raw military power and his determination to make good by force whatever sovereign title he desires needs no further elaboration.

Judges and civil officers were exhorted to let nothing interfere with their concern for justice in individual cases. Since the end of

¹⁴Hooker, I, Book I, 185.

¹⁵Elyot, p. 209.

¹⁶The Renaissance in England, eds. Hyder E. Rollins and Herschel Baker (Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1954), p. 304.

all law was the welfare of society, equity was recommended to an administrator because unbending application to the law could give support to wrong instead of right.¹⁷ Although the Elizabethans dealt out harsh justice in court, as evidenced by the extreme nature of criminal punishments, mercy was not out of order, but rather was to be commended.

Elyot says that "Mercye is and hath ben euer of suche estimation with mankynde, that nat onely reason persuadeth, but also experience proueth, that in whome mercye lacketh and is nat founden, in hym all other vertues be frowned and lose their iuste commendation."¹⁸ When Marlowe included the episode of Tamburlaine's command to massacre the virgins, he well knew that if he had consulted Elyot or any other moralist he would have been told that after such a revolting deed his major character was in every eye irredeemable. Marlowe went right ahead.

The two main ideals which prudence demands are modesty and temperance. Aristotle's golden mean was to be sought after in all actions and conduct. Castiglione's perfect courtier must ride well and dance gracefully; he must be at home in a number of languages and no stranger to learning; he must be acquainted with the fine arts and able to write poetry; but under no circumstances may he show himself so proficient in any one thing as to attract curiosity. The emphasis was on the well-rounded man. Any thing in excess was looked upon as out of place. Particularly was this true with the Elizabethan in regard to the passions,

¹⁷ See Kelso, pp. 77-78.

¹⁸Elyot, p. 141.

especially wrath, a Vice "most ugly and ferrest from humanitie," says

Elyot:

For who, beholdynge a man in estimation of nobilitie and wisdom by furie chaunged in to an horrible figure, his face infarced with rancour, his mouthe foule and imlosed, his eien wyde starynge and sparklynge like fire, nat speakyng, but as a wylde bulle, roryng and brayienge out wordes despitefull and venomous; forgetynge his astete or condition, forgeting lernyng, ye forgetynge all reason, wyll nat have suche a passion in extreme detestation? Shall he not wisshe to be in suche a man placabilitie? Whereby only he shulde be eftsones restored to the fourme of a man, whereof he is by wrathe despoyled. . . .¹⁹

Any passion in excess was a sign that the animal part of a man's nature had taken control of him. A passionate man whose will is no longer strong enough to control the passions has rejected the faculty of reason, thus losing the distinction between him and the animal world. He was dangerous to society because he had no respect for the Law of Nature or civil law which is derived from it. His reason allows him to know the Law and he has thrown it away by allowing his passions to get the upper hand. Therefore, a man must be careful to cultivate temperance by whose means all unruly passions are subdued unto reason, for to perfect his own nature man must distinguish himself from the animals by controlling his senses through a constant awareness of reason and moderation.

- Despite this belief in temperance as a defining characteristic of man's natural character, Marlowe, as we shall see, in attempting to equip his hero with a philosophy commensurate with the known actions of his historical counterpart, has Tamburlaine claim immoderation as the ideal

¹⁹Elyot, pp. 136-137.

analogously presented by nature and, as such, the basis for his right to assume a crown.]

Because of the part it plays in Tamburlaine I, a few words should be said about the sixteenth century theory of nobility. Since all honor came from God, He could take it away whenever the nobleman did not fulfill his duties or deserve his rank. Theoretically, the rank depended not upon blood, but upon the person's superior virtue, for men were to be accepted and revered for their virtue only. "Vertue only is able to make thee Noble," Cleland advises his young gentleman.²⁰ And Elyot says, "the estimation is in the metall and nat in the printe or figure."²¹ The two duties the nobleman had in the scheme of things were to govern properly those under him, and to set an example of goodness for them to follow. In either of these, the nobleman had to be the very embodiment of virtue and justice. In order for him to govern properly, which included looking to the needs of those dependent upon him, he was supplied with wealth and property through Divine generosity. However, material possessions were not given to the nobleman by God to keep for himself, but to use wisely in alleviating the needs of those around him. He was, in Latimer's words, "but God's officer, God's treasurer."²² Riches were not to be desired for their own sakes, but only as a means to serve God.

²⁰James Cleland, The Institution of a Young Noble Man (New York: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 1948), p. 5.

²¹Elyot, p. 130.

²²As quoted by L. C. Knights, Drama and Society in the Age of Jonson (London: Chatton & Windus, 1951), p. 154.

In fact, riches were looked on with a certain distrust. As everyone knew, wealth could be a liability to a man in gaining salvation, for the Bible emphasizes the difficulty a rich man has in gaining heaven. To quote Latimer again, riches "must be had, cum tremore, with fear; for it is a dangerous thing to have them."²³ This may seem a paradox to us today in view of the sixteenth century's giving rise to modern day commerce, capitalism, and banking, but it is just one of the many [inconsistencies between doctrine and practice which make the age so fascinating.] The fact is that although the sixteenth century contains events resulting in resounding changes in man's affairs as the modern era was beginning to emerge from Medievalism, the majority of English people, when it came to judging moral issues and standards of conduct, especially in a poem or play, tended to hold fast to traditional ideas.

As judged by these traditional standards, Tamburlaine, as his story was told by writers before Marlowe, could not but be condemned by the Elizabethans, although, to say the least, he represented something of an anomaly in their eyes. Here was a man who rose from a poor shepherd to the most powerful ruler of his day through a lifelong career of conquest, seemingly carried on merely to satisfy his insatiable love of battle and thirst for power; a thief, a rebel, and a cruel, bloody, and unlawful tyrant by their standards, yet singularly successful in his career, having never tasted defeat. At every point in his career he flaunted Natural Law, but never reaped his deserved punishment--at

²³Quoted by Knights, p. 156.

least, not in this world. Thus, in European accounts of Tamburlaine, the emphasis is upon his defeat and ignominious treatment of Bajazeth, since this episode made a beautiful example of the unexpected fall of princes and the dire punishments of pride. The moralists are embarrassingly silent, however, about the lack of a similar poetic justice in Tamburlaine's own case.

Marlowe, in his genius, transcended his age and saw in the career of the Scythian a vision of the glorious in man's spirit and, at the same time, the tragedy inherent in his limitations. The problem the dramatist had to surmount in order to pass on his vision to his audience was considerable. The story he wished to dramatize, in its main outlines, was already known to his audience and they would have had preconceived judgments of the main character before they came to the theatre. If the entire career of the historical Tamburlaine was vague in a prospective spectator's mind, he would still have some notion of the Tartar's character because the more spectacular episodes, i.e., the murder of the emissaries, the ill-treatment of Bajazeth, and the display of different colored tents, were well-known historical facts.²⁴ Since they were well known, Marlowe could hardly afford not to include them in his play, even though one was enough to make the character despicable by contemporary standards. Tamburlaine's ruthless murder of the innocent women and children, and his habit of massacring the entire population of cities

²⁴Leslie Spence, "The Influence of Marlowe's Sources on Tamburlaine I," Modern Philology, XXIV (1926), pp. 191-192.

which refused to surrender before he displayed black colors on the third day of a siege would have branded him inhumanly cruel and uncivilized. In this respect, the Soldan's outcry could be taken as the typical reaction of the Elizabethans toward these practices:

Merciless villain, peasant, ignorant
Of lawful arms of martial discipline,
Pillage and murder are his usual trades,
The slave usurps the glorious name of war!
(IV.i.65-68)

Renaissance ethical theory in war, drawn from the chivalric code, required that mercy be shown to the conquered. Similarly, it would denounce his cruel treatment and unnecessary taunting of Bajazeth. It might be noted that these three practices of Tamburlaine were specifically censured by most of the historians who mention the story.²⁵ Thus, the dramatist was obliged to stick close to his sources both for incidents and basic characterization.

Marlowe's problem, then, was [how to dramatize the historical story, which made Tamburlaine out as an unlawful tyrant to the Elizabethans, in such a way as to make him admirable to the audience without changing the basic characterization or events.]

Rather than twist history out of shape to fit his purpose, as a lesser artist might have done, Marlowe remains perfectly honest to his own vision and incorporates into his play every significant event contained in his sources, filling out the characterization of his hero with

²⁵For example, see Two very notable Commentaries (1562), Bk. I, fol. 5r; The Foreste (1571), Bk. II, Chap. XIV; The French Academy (1586), p. 253.

similarly unlawful elements. The first mention of Tamburlaine in the play labels him as a thief. In the opening scene, Meander speaks of "Tamburlaine, that sturdy Scythian thief," who robs traveling merchants, and with his lawless train, "daily commits incivil outrages." Tamburlaine's initial appearance on the stage confirms the truth of this accusation as he and his men enter "loaden with treasure" that they have just taken from Zenocrate and her party. Not only is he guilty of robbery, but by holding his prisoners against their wills, he is branded a kidnapper. When Zenocrate complains of his robbing "a silly maid," he describes the loot as

. . . friends that help to wean my state,
Till men and kingdoms help to strengthen it,
And must maintain my life exempt from servitude;
(I.ii.29-31)

thereby placing his whole subsequent career upon a foundation of theft.

He is admittedly "a shepherd by my parentage" and is at first dressed so; but not being satisfied with his natural place in life, he tells Zenocrate that he means to conquer Asia and be a terror to the world. Repeatedly referred to as a "fiery thirster after sovereignty," in the course of the play Tamburlaine aids Cosroe to depose the rightful king of Persia, and then double-crosses Cosroe to make himself king; although theory permits only defensive war, he wages frankly offensive wars of conquest against and conquers Bajazeth, the Soldan of Egypt, and the king of Arabia, all of whom are the rightful rulers of their respective empires. This succession of events, along with the three more spectacular episodes already mentioned, coincides exactly with Tamburlaine's career as given in the histories and makes up the entire

framework of Marlowe's plot.

In the play, as in the histories, Tamburlaine is above all else a rebel against and a usurper in the social order, and follows the pattern described by the sixteenth century writers on the subject, that is, behind every rebellion is an unlawful ambition derived from an overweening sense of pride. Marlowe is repeating orthodox theory when he has Meander say of the Scythians:

. . . with the spirit of his fearful pride,
He dares so doubtlessly resolve of rule,
And by profession be ambitious.
(II.vi.12-14)

As his empire becomes larger, so Tamburlaine's pride becomes correspondingly greater until toward the end of the play he openly defies the power of God in relation to his own. The dramatist points up the development of his hero's pride in the references to Jove which are continuously present in the dialogue. In the earlier parts of the play, Tamburlaine refers to Jove as his protector, but by the fourth act the conqueror openly defies Him. When Zenocrate pleads with him to spare Damascus, Tamburlaine swears that, "were Egypt Jove's own land,/ Yet would I with my sword make Jove to stoop" (IV.iv.75-76).

In addition to using the events and characterization found in his sources, Marlowe endowed his protagonist with a philosophy which squared with his actions and which, if anything, was even less conventional. For example, let us investigate the motivating agent of the entire play--Tamburlaine's thirst for sovereignty. To him and his henchmen,

A god is not so glorious as a king;
 . . . the pleasure they enjoy in heaven
 Cannot compare with kingly joys in earth.
 (II.v.57-59)

First of all, this is a clear case of heresy. Here is stated the belief that a mortal is greater than God and that earthly pleasures are to be preferred to heavenly salvation, in open contradiction of what perhaps were the two most fundamental doctrines of the sixteenth century: (1) that God was the creator of everything in the universe, and without His assistance man could not perform one action or have one thought of his own; and (2) that heavenly salvation was what every man should strive for in this life. More important for us here, however, is that wherever we touch Tamburlaine's thought, we will find that it is consistently heretical, consistent with his other pronouncements, and consistent with his actions.

When the mortally wounded Cosroe berates him for the injustice of his rebellion, Tamburlaine defends his actions in soaring lines, as exhilarating as any in the play, which, at the same time, twist orthodox theory into an unrecognizable shape. Tamburlaine claims that ambition is the necessary result of the nature of things, that it is inherent in natural law:

Nature, that fram'd us of four elements
 Warring within our breasts for regiment,
 Doth teach us all to have aspiring minds:
 Our souls, whose faculties can comprehend
 The wondrous architecture of the world,
 And measure every wandering planet's course,
 Still climbing after knowledge infinite,
 And always moving as the restless spheres,
 Wills us to wear ourselves and never rest,

✓ [Until we reach the ripest fruit of all,
That perfect bliss and sole felicity,
The sweet fruition of an earthly crown.
(II.iii.18-29)

Certainly, the traditional physiology taught that the elements in the body, being opposed in qualities, were in conflict with each other, and that frequently one of the elements, or rather its corresponding humor, exists within a body in such quantity as almost to exclude the other three elements. Tamburlaine supposes that this is an example in nature of a constant fight between the elements for supremacy and that it teaches that man should be ambitious and constantly strive for supremacy over other men until at last he reaches the supreme point of this ambition, an earthly crown. Now this is entirely antagonistic to sixteenth century theory, for it repudiates the main idea that bodily and mental health were the result of an ideal balance or proportion among the elements in the body and that all disease and illness was a result of one element tyrannizing over another. As Elyot states it, when the elements continue

in the proportion, that nature hath lymytted, the body is free from all syckenesse. Contrary wise, by the increase or diminution of any of them in quantite or qualytie, over or vnder their natural assignment, inequall temperature cometh in to the body, whiche syckenesse, foloweth more or lasse, accordynge to the lapse or decaye of the temperatures of the sayd humours. . . .²⁶

Thus, if Tamburlaine's analogy is completed in the light of contemporary belief, an aspiring mind leads to destruction. The lines describing the

²⁶Sir Thomas Elyot, The Castel of Helthe (1541), (New York: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 1937), p. 8a.

flight of the soul are deceptively similar to orthodox doctrine until the final lines show the end towards which such a flight actually moves. With Tamburlaine's "earthly crown" we are jolted into recognizing whither human logic may carry the powerfully aspiring mind. A similar passage from Sylvester's Du Bartas--whose original French lines are perhaps the very source of Marlowe's lines--containing the orthodox doctrine shows the extreme difference between Tamburlaine's assertion and contemporary belief:

By th'Aire steepe staires, she boldly climbs aloft
 To the Worlds Chambers; Heau'n she visites oft
 Stage after Stage: she marketh all the Spheares,
 And all th'harmonious, various course of theirs;
 With sure account, and certaine Compasses,
 She counts their Starres, she meates their distances,
 And differing paces; and as if she found
 No subject faire enough in all this Round,
 She mounts aboue the Worlds extreamest wall,
 Farre, farre beyond all things corporeall;
 Where she beholds her Maker face to face. . . .²⁷

Du Bartas, as the doctrine of the immortality of the soul demands, fixes the highest object of the soul as participation with God in Heaven. This is intimately connected with the Christian belief in salvation, which we have already seen denied by Tamburlaine, so it is not very surprising that he assigns so completely different an object to the soul. Marlowe is consistent in his characterization of the Scythian.

Tamburlaine's theory of what constitutes the just basis for kingship and nobility turns out to be similarly unorthodox when it is

²⁷Quoted by Kocher, p. 75.

analyzed closely.²⁸ He believes that the base-born has as much right to the throne as anyone. Though born of shepherd parents, he calls himself a lord, "For so my deeds shall prove." Tamburlaine's "deeds" are all of a martial nature--an unbroken series of victories in battle; there is no significant action in the play which is not concerned in some way with his extraordinary achievements of conquest.

For Tamburlaine, a title is merely the result of its seizure. When a king is defeated, his titles pass automatically to the victor; there are no other criteria to be consulted for the justice of the seizure or the victor's right to assume the titles. And herein lies the heart of Tamburlaine's theory. It is purely a matter of power. Might makes right. When he gives crowns to Techelles, Usumcasane, and Theridamas, he exhorts them to

Deserve these titles I endow you with,
By valor and by magnanimity.
Your births shall be no blemish to your fame;
For virtue is the fount whence honour springs,
And they are worthy she investeth kings.

(IV.iv.128-132)

On the surface, this seems to agree with the contemporary belief that theoretically nobility depended upon virtue. In reality, however, these lines are perfectly in keeping with his other beliefs and are just as unlawful. To really understand Tamburlaine's words of advice, we have to know what he means by virtue and honour. He certainly was not referring to conventional virtues, for by so doing he would have been condemning his own actions. Justice, as it was dealt out by Tam-

²⁸I am somewhat indebted to Kocher's chapter on Marlowe's politics and ethics, pp. 175-212, for the following interpretation.

burlaine, was dependent not upon what a man deserved, but merely upon the conqueror's will. Nor by any stretch of the imagination could Tamburlaine be called temperate. What he does mean by virtue is nothing more than military prowess, and his honor, as he himself says, "consists in shedding blood."

What is it about a crown that makes it so attractive to Tamburlaine; so much so that he prefers kingly joys on earth to heavenly joys? The answer is made clear when one of his henchmen says,

To wear a crown enchas'd with pearl and gold,
Whose virtues carry with it life and death;
To ask and have, command and be obeyed:
.....
Such power attractive shines in princes eyes.
(II.v.60-64)

The crown he desires carries power over life and death. "To ask and have, command and be obeyed," without any reference to restrictions, puts the prince above the law. The prince's will alone is the law. That this is what Tamburlaine means is borne out by his practice. When Agydas speaks against him to Zenocrate, Tamburlaine does not even have to make a judgment: he merely shows his will with a wrathful look. Then Agydas is presented a dagger; there is no questioning of Tamburlaine's justice; Agydas commits suicide, and no comments are made over the incident except that he died well. Tamburlaine's will is accepted as law even by the victim. Although Tudor practice sometimes encroached upon it, the prevailing political ideal was that the law-making power resided in the social body as a whole, no matter what the political system. And the agents of government were under the law, not above

it.²⁹

From the foregoing discussion, it should be clear that

(1) the historical Tamburlaine was unlawful and despicable by Elizabethan standards;

(2) his career was likely to have been familiar to Marlowe's audience;

(3) because of the audience's familiarity with his subject, Marlowe was obliged to conform closely to the events and implied characterization contained in his sources;

(4) Marlowe incorporated all the significant events of the historical Tamburlaine's career, retained all the unlawful elements in his characterization of the conqueror, in some cases adding to these elements, and endowed him with a philosophy fully in accord with his actions; and

(5) the actions and thoughts of Marlowe's Tamburlaine, like those of the historical Tamburlaine, are morally despicable by Elizabethan standards.

In order to gain admiration for his hero in the face of these odds, Marlowe was forced to weigh almost every single word he wrote against what the audience's reaction to Tamburlaine was likely to be.

²⁹For example, Hooker says (I, Bk. 1, 194), "the lawful power of making laws to command whole politic societies of men belongeth so properly unto the same societies, that for any prince or potentate of what kind soever upon earth to exercise the same of him self, and not either by express communion immediately and personally received from God, or else by authority derived at the first from their consent upon whose persons they impose laws, it is no better than mere tyranny."

III

✓

In working out his solution to the problem of gaining acceptance for Tamburlaine, Marlowe was an innovator. Without prior dramatic models to imitate or any simple rules to follow, he relied mainly upon his own understanding of his contemporaries, the patterns of response by which their moral judgments could be predicted and controlled. Sometimes he probably proceeded by shrewd calculation, sometimes by instinctive dramatic genius. The total result, Marlowe's design, as it exists in the play, is not multifaceted but one. No part can be isolated without losing some of its force, for all parts achieve their ultimate effect only in their existence within the whole, where each simultaneously interacts with and complements the others. Consequently, the general headings of our discussion do not by any means imply that each single device is calculated to achieve one single purpose and can therefore be neatly classified. Illustrations used to exhibit one aspect of Marlowe's technique of apotheosis frequently illustrate other aspects equally well.

A. Tamburlaine Is Characterized as a Superhuman Being.

✓ By choosing to retain all the unlawful elements of the historical Tamburlaine in the character of his play, [Marlowe had to resort to some method of making the audience lay aside their moral preconceptions if there was to be any hope of eliciting admiration for his hero.] Being

acutely aware of the pillars of belief upon which the probable reactions of his audience would be anchored, Marlowe realized that in the light of his contemporaries' conviction that God takes an active part in man's affairs on earth, the very fact that Tamburlaine was singularly successful in all his undertakings could be manipulated in such a way as to achieve his aim. As Battenhouse has pointed out, Sylvester's Du Bartas displays very nicely the characteristic features of the doctrine of divine providence in human affairs. The verses point out that the Almighty is not

an idle God
That larks in Heav'n and never looks abroad,
That crowns not Vertue, and corrects not Vice,
Blinde to our service, deaf unto our sighs:

On the contrary, His judgments are always fair and are not delayed until another world either:

God is the Judge, who keeps continuall Sessions,
In every place to punish all transgressions.¹

A most spectacular example of God's intervention in the affairs of man, the recurring plague, ever presented itself to the sixteenth century as the dread weapon of an avenging God. As preacher and pamphleteer declared, the plague was a God-sent punishment upon a Godless city; it would cease as soon as London repented. By proper conduct--which of course included a right posture towards the Almighty--disaster could be averted and success, even in this world, might be achieved, for God would not ignore the righteous in a world of so many sinners. The

¹Quoted by Roy W. Battenhouse, Marlowe's 'Tamburlaine': A Study in Renaissance Moral Philosophy (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1941), pp. 86-87.

Elizabethans acted on their belief. For example, the East India Company included among the supplies necessary to be sent to their agents Foxe's Acts and Monuments, books of Psalms, and service books.²

To induce the audience to withhold their judgments against the actions of his hero, Marlowe uses this belief in God's direct intervention in the affairs of man in two ways. At times, [by emphasizing the scourge motif, he makes Tamburlaine the instrument of God's revenge on earth, a tool manipulated by God for His own purposes.] [More often, Marlowe makes use of the corollary of the belief: that good fortune is a sign of divine approval. It is a doctrine made into a dramatically effective tool by a long tradition of poetic justice upon the stage.] The effect of both devices is to raise doubt in the spectators' minds whether the conqueror is an ordinary mortal to whom the regular laws can be applied. But this is not his most important device. What he placed most of his dependence upon [In order to bring about this suspension of judgment on the part of the audience was to beguile them into ignoring the fact that Tamburlaine was, after all, another human being and, as such, responsible to Natural Law for his actions. By attempting to impress upon the audience a feeling that Tamburlaine was different in kind from them, Marlowe was following a practice which had been historically proven successful by countless wielders of power, both political and religious.]

²Louis B. Wright, Middle-Class Culture in Elizabethan England (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1935), pp. 229-230.

From time immemorial rulers had enhanced their authority and discouraged a too close scrutiny of their own actions by doing everything they could to expand the natural feeling of awe which people have for the seat of power. The normal method of achieving this was for the ruler to disassociate himself as much as possible from the physical appearances and habits of his subjects, to hold himself aloof, and discourage familiarity. The end effect aimed at was to impress upon his subjects the belief in a fundamental difference in kind between him and them. Thus, throughout history, we find rulers reserving special prerogatives to themselves, residing in lavish and imposing edifices, insisting upon the value and qualities of blood lines, clothing themselves in sumptuous robes and ornaments, instituting and continuing elaborate ceremonies of pomp and magnificence. In order to further the illusion such things presented to the minds and eyes of his subjects, the ruler was careful to restrict all social intercourse with his subjects to what was strictly necessary. Shakespeare dramatized the principle. It is for ignoring these practical devices that Prince Hal in Henry IV, Part One was criticized by his father, who cites his own acquisition of the throne through having made his presence to the citizens

like a robe pontifical,
Ne'er seen but wond'ring at; and so my state,
Seldom but sumptuous, show'd like a feast
And won by rareness such solemnity.
(III.ii.56-59)³

The same motive is behind the medieval knight's disdain to

³New Cambridge Edition.

joust with any except those who were themselves knights, and behind Castiglione's advice to the courtier not ever to put himself in a position where he might be overcome in a feat of physical skill by a commoner, or even to allow the multitude to view often his ability and athletic ability, "for there is no thing so excellent in the world, that the ignorant people have not their fill of, and smally regard it in often beholding it."⁴

Taking their cue from the temporal rulers, religious leaders adapted the same practices to their profession: the fantastic costumes and accessories of witch doctors, the richness of the priest's vestments, the greater richness of the bishop's robes, the temporal magnificence with which medieval and Renaissance prelates surrounded themselves, the symbolism and ritual woven into the elaborate services of the Church.

Even language was used to create awe and emphasize differences as evidenced by the Church's refusal to give up the [magnificently sonorous traditional Latin] as the ecclesiastical language after it was no longer used in ordinary communication, by the use of the impressive chant in religious services, by the cant terms used by charlatans and alchemists, and by the cryptic utterances preferred by oracles.

If the efficacy of such measures is doubted, one has only to compare the biographical facts of most monarchs with the contemporary moral and ethical standards; e.g., Philip IV of France, Henry VIII, Elizabeth I, or Louis XIV, all of whom enjoyed long reigns and died of

⁴Castiglione, pp. 98-100.

natural causes. Or consider how many centuries without molestation many prelates lived in a manner incompatible with the unworldly precepts they preached. Even today, when we can daily open our newspapers or turn on our television sets and see the President of the United States in an ordinary business suit, deliberately using folksy expressions, or being caricatured by cartoonists, the success of the old devices when applied is still apparent in the almost reverential reception Elizabeth II received from the American public during her recent visit to this country, despite the fact that while here the regal trappings were not visible.

✓ [Marlowe, in his play, works upon this susceptibility in members of his audience just as they and their ancestors were daily manipulated by centuries of overlords. From the beginning of the play, the dramatist misses no opportunity to impress upon the audience that Tamburlaine is above the level of ordinary human nature. A number of means are employed in creating this impression; the most immediately noticeable is perhaps the hero's manner of expressing himself. Tamburlaine's threats and aspirations are inconcrete, extreme, highly figurative, and general, giving the impression that they come from a mind that bears little resemblance to those of ordinary mortals. He himself says that his thoughts are "coequal with the clouds." Upon Tamburlaine's first appearance, the audience has been prepared to meet only a successful and clever bandit chieftain. They receive a shock upon the discovery that this thief, with only five hundred followers,

. . . means to be a terror to the world,
 Measuring the limits of his empery
 By east and west, as Phoebus doth his course.
 (I.ii.38-40)

It is a planned shock. And to make these lines more dramatic, Marlowe has Tamburlaine here shed his shepherd's "weeds" on stage revealing a complete suit of armor underneath. Besides the dramatic effect of this symbolic change of dress, we should keep in mind throughout the play that the title role in the early performances was played by the greatest tragedian of the time, Edward Alleyn, whose towering physique and powerful voice added greatly to the extraordinary impression given by the character.

Man usually has some definite goal in his ambition; he desires to be a doctor, a lawyer, a plumber, or a bricklayer. He wants a three-bedroom house or a fifteen-room mansion, a car-port or a seven-car garage. He wants to be a millionaire or, like Cosroe, to be "solely emperor of Asia." No matter how high the ambition, it is expressed by something definite or some limit. Tamburlaine measures his projected empire by "east and west!"

Whenever Tamburlaine speaks of numbers, it is never any definite figure, but an infinity. He says that his followers

May have the leading of so great an host
As with their weight shall make the mountains quake.
(I.ii.48-49)

And later he tells Cosroe that

The host of Xerxes, which by fame is said
To drink the mighty Parthian Araris,
Was but a handful to that we will have.
(II.iii.15-17)

✓ [His threats and assertions of future accomplishments are in the manner of hyperboles and of the kind impossible for mere mortals to effect, impossible for them fully to understand.] In his description of the mighty

host he will eventually command, he says,

Our quivering lances shaking in the air
And bullets like Jove's dreadful thunderbolts
Enrolled in flames and fiery smouldering mists
Shall threat the gods more than Cycloplan wars;
And with our sun-bright armour, as we march,
We'll chase the stars from heaven and dim their eyes
That stand and muse at our admired arms.
(II.iii.18-24)

After putting Cosroe's crown on his own head, Tamburlaine vows that no one will ever be able to take it away from him. Characteristically, his mind does not pause to defy human laws or possible retribution at the hand of other mortals; rather, his mind immediately jumps to the supernatural, the superhuman realm of mythology:

Not all the curses which the furies breathe
Shall make me leave so rich a prize as this.
(II.vii.53-54)

Later in the play, he threatens that before he leaves Egypt, he will:

Fill all the air with fiery meteors;
Then, when the sky shall wax as red as blood,
It shall be said I made it red myself,
To make me think of naught but blood and war.
(IV.ii.52-55)

This is neither a human possibility, nor is it clear exactly what he means by filling the air with meteors or how he intends to accomplish it.

Outside the play, Tamburlaine's threats may sound like just so much empty boasting. However, as Harry Levin has pointed out, assertion here is almost the same as action:

✓ Driven by an impetus toward infinity and faced with the limitations of the stage, [the basic convention of Marlovian drama is to take the word for the deed] Words are weapons; conflict

perforce is invective, verbal rather than physical aggression; through musters and parleys, wars of nerves are fought out by exchanging boasts or parrying insults.⁵

This is especially the case in Tamburlaine where so many battles between massive armies are fought, and the action is strung out across two continents. Marlowe dramatically emphasizes the convention. When Mycetes sends Theridamas to apprehend Tamburlaine, he says,

Go, stout Theridamas, thy words are swords,
And with thy looks thou conquerest all thy foes.
(I.i.74-75)

Upon his decision to join Tamburlaine, Marlowe has Theridamas say, as pointedly as possible, "Won with thy words, and conquered with thy looks" (I.ii.227). In another place, the Scythian tells Theridamas,

Nor are Apollo's oracles more true
Than thou shalt find my vaunts substantial.
(I.ii.211-212)

✓ [By virtue of the fact that Tamburlaine's actions are invariably successful, Tamburlaine's boasts do not ring like the idle rhetoric of an ambitious soldier or madman.] Marlowe inhibits the audience from setting any definite limits upon what is possible; consequently, the audience tends to accept, at least tentatively, that even the conqueror's wildest threats can be performed by him.

Tamburlaine's preternatural quality shows even clearer in the statements of other characters in the play, both friends and foes, and most of these are in very general terms. His looks "menace heaven and dare the gods," on his brows is portrayed "ugly death," his eyes shine

⁵Harry Levin, The Overreacher, A Study of Christopher Marlowe (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1952), pp. 43-44.

like comets, and his bullets are "like Jove's dreadful thunderbolts."

Zenocrate describes him loftily but somewhat ambiguously:

As looks the sun through Nilus' flowing stream,
Or when the Morning holds him in her arms,
So looks my lordly love, fair Tamburlaine;
His talk much sweeter than the Muses' song
They sung for honour 'gainst Pierides,
Or when Minerva did with Neptune strive.
(III.ii.47-52)

Descriptions of Tamburlaine by other characters convey magnitude and power, not by credible, persuasively accurate details but by figures calculated rather to dazzle than to clarify. Cosroe speaks of him as

The man that in the forehead of his fortune
Bears figures of renown and miracle.
(II.i.3-4)

To Ortygius, he is "the man ordain'd by heaven" (II.i.52). Manaphon, in answer to Cosroe's request, gives the fullest and most complimentary description of him in the play. Beginning with a physical description of Tamburlaine's large stature, including "such breadth of shoulders as might bear/ Old Atlas' burthen," the Persian adds that Tamburlaine has not a head on his shoulders but "a pearl more worth than all the world." In this remarkable topknot are no eyes but

piercing instruments of sight,
Whose fiery circles bear encompassed
A heaven of heavenly bodies in their spheres.
(II.i.14-16)

His brows, when frowning, "figure death," but when smooth, "amity and life." He has hair of unusual properties, for there "the breath of heaven delights to play." Menaphon's description is mainly calculated to present a magnitude rather than a biped. But then the magnitude is conferred upon a man, a stupendous man,

In every part proportioned like the man
Should make the world subdued to Tamburlaine.
(II.i.29-30)

This is certainly no picture of an ordinary mortal and Cosroe's comment on the description, that it is the "face and personage of a wondrous man," phrases what is to be thought by every person in the audience. The supernatural aspect of the character is furthered by two of Cosroe's followers as they try to understand Tamburlaine's rebellious actions. Meander claims that he was conceived not by human parents but by "powers divine, or else infernal" (II.vi.9), and Ortygius echoes him:

What god or fiend or spirit of the earth
Or monster turned to a manly shape,
Or of what mould or mettle he be made,
.
Whether from earth or hell or heaven he grow.
(II.vi.15-23)

✓ [Another method which Marlowe uses to set Tamburlaine above mankind is a very careful selection of the poetic imagery used to describe his hero. It was a common practice among the early Elizabethan dramatists to achieve characterization partly by alluding to some recognizable classical figure, whose significant qualities are thereby identified with the character.⁶ Tamburlaine is associated with the gods, especially Jove, in this respect. The association is applied during Tamburlaine's first appearance on the stage, most notably in his persuasion of Theridamas to join him.] Tamburlaine first characterizes himself as a special favorite of Jove:

⁶See Emily B. Stanley, "The Use of Classical Mythology by the University Wits," Renaissance Papers (1956), p. 26.

Draw forth thy sword, thou mighty man at arms,
 Intending but to raze my charmed skin,
 And Jove himself will stretch his hand from heaven
 To ward the blow, and shield me safe from harm.
 (I.ii.177-180)

The association of Tamburlaine with Jove is repeated almost constantly throughout the play. It was well known that Jove used thunderbolts as weapons. This image is used twice in one scene. Tamburlaine's bullets are "like Jove's dreadful thunderbolts," and repeating the image just forty lines later, the conqueror says that his curtle-axe shall

fly as swift
 As does lightning or the breath of heaven,
 And kill as sure as it swiftly flies.
 (II.iii.57-59)

When he defends his rebellion against Cosroe, he claims Jove's rebellion in heaven as a precedent (II.vii.12-17).

Marlowe repeats the identification indirectly through Zenocrate by associating her with Juno. She says,

And higher would I rear my estimate
 Than Juno, sister to the highest god,
 If I were matched with mighty Tamburlaine.
 (III.ii.53-55)

And in the final speech of the play, as he is about to declare a "truce with all the world" after defeating every opponent in sight, Tamburlaine says,

As Juno, when the giants were suppressed
 That darted mountains at her brother Jove,
 So looks my love. . . .
 (V.ii.448-450)

This association of Tamburlaine with Jove which is constantly made by the Scythian and his friends is always in connection with Jove as the conqueror of Saturn or the Titans. Tamburlaine's enemies too think of

Tamburlaine as a member of the mythological hierarchy, but they regard him as one of the Titans revolting against Jove. For example, Cosroe asks,

What means this devilish shepherd, to aspire
With such a giantly presumption,
To cast up hills against the face of heaven,
And dare the force of angry Jupiter?
(II.vi.1-4)

In other places, Tamburlaine is likened to Hermes (I.ii.209), Apollo ✓ (I.ii.211), Hercules (I.ii.157-160), and Atlas (II.i.10-11). [One of the most important associations is that which links the Scythian with Aeneas. Philemus tells Zenocrate that her father and Arabia "Comes now as Turnus 'gainst Aeneas did." It will be remembered that there was a widespread belief among the Elizabethans that England had originally been settled by the Trojans; therefore, Aeneas was a special hero to them.] Zenocrate picks up this simile and elaborates it as she worries about the outcome of the battle between Tamburlaine and her father. She hopes that the outcome will be in Tamburlaine's favor,

. . . as the god, to end the Trojan's toil
Prevented Turnus of Lavinia,
And fatally enriched Aeneas' love.
(V.ii.330-332)

Throughout the entire play Marlowe is careful that not one description of Tamburlaine is couched in terms which could be applied to ✓ an ordinary man. [The only mortals with whom he is compared are three mighty heroes, Achilles, Aeneas, and Julius Caesar.] To appreciate the effect of this wealth of similes, all of which compare Tamburlaine with superhumans out of antiquity, we must remember that the cult of the hero had not in the sixteenth century gone through the leveling process of

modern biography and modern historical research. [To the Elizabethans, the great heroes of myth, literature, and history were to be approached with awe and reverence.]

Another association which is handled in a much more subtle manner, but which acts upon the audience with perhaps the strongest single effect, is that which [identifies Tamburlaine with the elemental bodies of the skies, particularly with the sun.] Marlowe accomplishes this partly through a few similes which directly compare his hero with the sun. One of these, in Zenocrate's mouth, we have already noticed. Tamburlaine says he will measure his empire "as Phoebus does his course" and elsewhere he calls himself, "the chiefest lamp of all the earth" (IV.ii.36). These, of course, serve to fix the identification in the audience's minds, but the image is sustained and even magnified by the indirect suggestions the author introduces continuously into the dialogue. In the majority of Tamburlaine's speeches, his thoughts are directed upwards in the images he uses and in the desires he voices. Consequently, the upward direction is associated in the audience's minds with Tamburlaine.

Then, too, he has a habit of describing his military feats in imagery of destruction from the sky. Not only does he compare his weapons to Jove's lightnings and thunders, but his name and honor, he says, shall be spread

As far as Boreas claps his brazen wings,
Or fair Bootes sends his cheerful light.
(I.ii.204-205)

Tamburlaine has "fiery eyes" that "shine like comets" below lofty,

cloudy, and furrowed brows; and "sooner shall the sun fall from its sphere" than he should be slain or defeated (I.ii.175-176). After defeating Bajazeth, Tamburlaine says that his sword struck fire from the Turk's coat of steel,

As when a fiery exhalation,
Wrapt in the bowels of a freezing cloud
Fighting for passage, makes the welkin crack,
And casts a flash of lightning to the earth.
(IV.ii.43-46)

Marlowe goes to much trouble gaining the effect he desires, but the effect is impressive. By the end of the third act the spectator or reader, in contrast to the Tamburlaine on the stage, has in the mind's eye a Tamburlaine of gigantic proportions whose head towers somewhere up among the planets and whose customs and decrees are as peremptory "as wrathful planets, death, or destiny." The audience at the Rose was surely capable of sympathizing with Agydas just before that warrior committed suicide:

As when a seaman sees the Hyades,
Gather an army of Cimmerian clouds,
(Auster and Aquilon with winged steeds,
All sweating, tilt about the watery heavens,
With shivering spears enforcing thunderclaps,
And from their shields strike flames of lightening)
All fearful folds his sails and sounds the main,
Lighting his prayers to the heavens for aid
Against the terror of the winds and waves;
So fares Agydas for the late felt frowns,
That sent a tempest to my daunted thoughts,
And makes my soul divine her overthrow.
(III.ii.76-87)

Marlowe underlines this impression of a colossal Tamburlaine by making his hero dominate completely the play's action and thought. He

speaks fully one-third of the total lines,⁷ is spoken about in most of the remainder, and his very name is repeated time after time. But Marlowe emphasizes Tamburlaine in ways more subtle than this, as Professor Ants Oras has shown in a study of Marlowe's use of assonance.⁸ In more than one-third of the passages in which the name Tamburlaine occurs, the long [ɛ] (Kökeritz's [e:])⁹ of its final syllable is repeated "in closely juxtaposed words placed in emphatic metrical positions."¹⁰ For example:

From jiggig veins of riming mother wits,
And such conceits as clownage keeps in pay,
We'll lead you to a stately tent of war,
Where you shall hear the Scythian Tamburlaine
. . . .

This technique of repeating the vowel [ɛ:] in stressed syllables enhances the emotional qualities which the dramatist connects with the conqueror's name, especially power and expansiveness, and in the manner of a leitmotif helps to create an all-pervading awareness of Tamburlaine's personality throughout the play, even in scenes when he is not physically present on the stage. For example, in the opening scene, when Mycetes is directing Theridamas to take his thousand horsemen and put to rout the Scythian and his followers, Tamburlaine's name is

⁷Levin, Appendix G, p. 186.

⁸Ants Oras, "Lyrical Instrumentation in Marlowe," Studies in Shakespeare, eds. A. D. Matthews and C. M. Emory (Miami: University of Miami Press, 1953), pp. 74-87).

⁹Helge Kökeritz, Shakespeare's Pronunciation (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953), p. 173.

¹⁰Oras, p. 83.

echoing in the ears of the audience even before he has made his first appearance. In a passage of eight lines, six contain the vowel [e:] in their final syllables, and two of these make perfect rimes with Tamburlaine. Mycetes tells Theridamas that he is to be the leader of this thousand horse,

Whose foaming gall with rage and high disdain
Have sworn the death of wicked Tamburlaine.
Go frowning forth, but come thou smiling home,
As did Sir Paris with the Grecian dame.
Return with speed, time passeth swift away,
Our life is frail, and we may die to-day.
Ther. Before the moon renew her borrowed light,
Doubt not, my lord and gracious sovereign.
(I.i.63-70)

Certain expressions echoing Tamburlaine's name with particular frequency have connotations conducive to the illusion Marlowe was creating, e.g., reign, chain(s), train, pain(s), great, state. In Professor Oras' words, one of the advantages of such a technique is that "it created effects without the audience clearly realizing whence they derived. It stirred up feeling without quite reaching the intellectual level: so, it was capable of taking the listener unawares."¹⁰ It was a means of reinforcing in the audience the impression that Tamburlaine was a being of superhuman proportions, not the sort of man to be judged by ordinary criteria.

✓ B. [Tamburlaine's Virtues are Emphasized.]

If he could induce his audience to suspend moral condemnation of

¹¹Oras, p. 86.

Tamburlaine, Marlowe's object was partly, but only partly, accomplished.

✓ He also had to stimulate their admiration, something quite different.

To this end he relied mainly upon emphasizing in his hero the conventional virtues which could be attributed to him without distorting the historical evidence too severely.]

In the first place, as Marlowe well knew, the people of his generation had impulses that justified the sermons against ambition: with the approval of the Queen herself, they looked to men like Drake, Frobisher, and Hawkins as heroes. The Elizabethans had a special respect for men of action. With a whole new world opened up to the west, Tudor nationalism growing by leaps and bounds, Englishmen widened their horizons and flexed their muscles as their country began to take its place as a world power. They were impressed by tangible achievements. It did not matter that the great sea captains were pirates and murderers.

✓ [Spaniards and heathen savages were the victims and any inroads made upon them were to be applauded.] It is this same loyalty to one's own hostilities that Marlowe appeals to by unhistorically making Tamburlaine the friend of Christianity and the oppressor of its enemies. But Tamburlaine is not merely an astoundingly successful soldier.

✓ [His physical courage is unquestionable.] Its first manifestation comes early in the play, upon the approach of Theridamas. Realizing that his five hundred footmen are overmatched by twice that many mounted men (I.ii.121-122), he wisely decides to first attempt to gain them to his side by a parley. There is no suggestion of fear or cowardliness in this decision; it is strictly one of policy, and he instructs his followers that if the Persians offer words or violence, "We'll fight, five

hundred men at arms to one,/ Before we part with our possession" (I.ii. 142-144). He does not take notice of his own personal safety; rather, he places himself in the most dangerous position:

Keep all your standings, and not stir a foot,
Myself will bide the danger of the brunt.
(I.ii.150-151)

Throughout the play Marlowe is careful not to let anything interfere with the audience's original conception of the conqueror's courage, although at times this concern forces him to twist some of the reported facts. The details of Tamburlaine's defeat of Cosroe are all of Marlowe's creation, as can be seen in the following description of the incident in Fortescue:

After this, by this newe prince, in recompence of his seruice, he Tamburlaine was ordained generall of the greater part of his armie who vnder pretexte that he woulde conquire, and subdue, other prouinces to the Persians, mustered still, and gathered, more Souldiars at hys pleasure, with whom he so practiced, that they easely reuolted like Rebels followyng hym, subduyng their Leage, and Soueraigne.¹²

Thus, in the sources, Tamburlaine gained the crown of Persia by an underhanded recruiting of soldiers on false pretences, and his forces outnumbered the king's at the time of rebellion. In the play, Marlowe ignores completely Tamburlaine's illegal mustering of men and has the revolt take place immediately following the victory over Mycetes. In addition to saving his hero from the charge of underhandedness, Marlowe accentuates his valor and fairness by having him acquaint Cosroe with his intentions beforehand; instead of attacking him by surprise from the rear,

¹²As quoted in Ellis-Fermor edition, Appendix C, p. 289.

which would have been the safest and surest way, he sends a messenger to advise the Persian of the intended attack:

We will not steal upon him cowardly,
But give him warning and more warriors.
(II.v.102-103)

Although the exact numbers are not given, the above lines and Theridamas' exclamatory question, "A jest to charge on twenty thousand men?", imply that Tamburlaine is again outnumbered.

✓ In the battle with Bajazeth, Marlowe takes the same freedom with the facts in order to make Tamburlaine more courageous and his victory greater. Fortescue and Whetstone both give the same figure for the size of Tamburlaine's army by this time, i.e., 400,000 horsemen and 600,000 footmen.¹³ Concerning Bajazeth's army, Fortescue says, ". . . some affirme, he had as many horsemen as had the greate Tamburlaine, with a merueilous number of other Souldiars, bothe olde, and of much experience. . . ." ¹⁴ And Whetstone says, ". . . by estimation he had as many horsemen as Tamberlayne, and a great number of footmen. . . ." ¹⁵ In either case, it is clear that Bajazeth's forces did not outnumber those of Tamburlaine, and if there was any numerical advantage, the implication is that it lay with the latter.

In the play, Marlowe gives Bajazeth an overwhelming majority in numbers. Tamburlaine asks the Turk's messenger to

¹³Ellis-Fermor edition, Appendix C, pp. 291, 299.

¹⁴Ellis-Fermor edition, Appendix C, p. 291.

¹⁵Ellis-Fermor edition, Appendix C, p. 300.

View well my camp, and speak indifferently;
 Do not my captains and my soldiers look
 As if they meant to conquer Africa?
 (III.iii.8-10)

The basso answers that, though valiant, their numbers are few in comparison with the army of Bajazeth, "And cannot terrify his mighty host" (III.iii.11-12). Bajazeth, just before the battle begins, tells Tamburlaine,

I have of Turks, Arabians, Moors and Jews,
 Enough to cover all Bithynia.
 Let thousands die: their slaughtered carcasses
 Shall serve for walls and bulwarks to the rest;

 Thou knowest not, foolish-hardy Tamburlaine,
 What 'tis to meet me in the open field,
 That leave no ground for thee to march upon.
 (III.iii.136-147)

Here we have in no uncertain terms that Tamburlaine must face odds difficult to imagine. And yet Tamburlaine defeats this ocean of foes, apparently in short time and without any difficulty. In Marlowe's sources, we find the battle described as being particularly bitter, with the outcome not decided until the very end.¹⁶ It is significant that Marlowe allows Tamburlaine the glory of personally defeating the Turk himself, with the S. D. "The battle short." Actually, Bajazeth was captured by the sheer weight of numbers and then brought before Tamburlaine.¹⁷ The individual combat between the two is purely of Marlowe's making.

¹⁶Whetstone calls it "the fiercest battaile that in any age was foughten. . . ." Ellis-Fermor edition, p. 300.

¹⁷Ellis-Fermor edition, pp. 292, 300.

Marlowe achieves a certain degree of sympathy for his hero by ascribing to Tamburlaine virtues which are at best barely hinted at in his sources.

✓ In the play,^{*}[Tamburlaine and his lieutenants live in almost idyllic amity and loyalty.] Techelles tells Theridamas,

We are his friends, and if the Persian king
Should offer present dukedoms to our state,
We think it loss to make exchange for that
We are assured of by our friend's success.
(I.ii.213-216)

Tamburlaine clearly shows the feeling to be mutual:

These are my friends in whom I more rejoice,
Than doth the king of Persia in his crown:
And by the love of Pylades and Orestes,
Whose statues we adore in Scythia,
Thyself and them shall never part from me,
Before I crown you kings in Asia.
Make much of them, gentle Theridamas,
And they will never leave thee till the death.
(I.ii.240-247)

Theridamas is so impressed (as indeed Marlowe intends the audience to be), he tells Cosroe that it "Would make one thrust and strive to be retain'd/ In such a great degree of amity" (II.iii.31-32).

✓ For the effect this friendship must have had upon the minds of the spectators, we must once again revert to contemporary ideas. As a result of the veneration for classical ideals and virtues,^{*}[friendship was held in much higher esteem throughout the Renaissance than it is today.] Castiglione calls the name of friendship "holy" and would have his courtier "finde him out an especiall and hartie friend. . . ."18

¹⁸The Book of the Courtier, p. 120.

Elyot, showing the extent to which it was esteemed in the sixteenth century, makes friendship a sure criterion for judging a man's character:

Sens friendshippe can nat be but in good men, ne may nat be without vertue, we may be assured that thereof none iuell may procede, or therewith any iuell may participate.¹⁹

Perhaps it would be a mistake to apply Elyot's words too literally here in gauging the effect upon the audience of the friendship in the play; however, it is doubtless true that Marlowe's emphasizing this virtue in Tamburlaine and his followers did cause the spectators to look upon them with a more kindly eye.

✓ [The obvious motive behind an attempt to raise oneself in the world is a desire for wealth. Marlowe makes certain that this imputation cannot be placed upon Tamburlaine.] When Bajazeth asks his vanquisher to set a ransom upon him, Tamburlaine refuses, saying, "What, thinkst thou Tamburlaine esteems thy gold?" More significantly, at the Tartar's first appearance on the stage, having just attacked and robbed Zenocrate's caravan, he says to his prisoners,

Disdains Zenocrate to live with me?
Or you, my lords, to be my followers?
Think you I weigh this treasure more than you?

✓ [Not all the gold in India's wealthy arms
Shall buy the meanest soldier in my train]
(I.ii.82-86)

Here is a fiery thirster after sovereignty who [thinks more of his friends than of a crown, and a thief who esteems his meanest soldier higher than all the gold in India.] How far these virtues went toward softening the revulsion against Tamburlaine's vices is difficult to tell, but that

¹⁹The Boke Named the Governour, p. 162.

their presentation had some effect upon the audience's judgment is certain. In any event, it was clear that Tamburlaine was no ordinary rebel or thief. Regarding the latter appellation, Marlowe makes an obvious attempt to modify it by having Ceneus sublimate the Scythian's actions:

He that with shepherds and a little spoil,
Durst, in disdain of wrong and tyranny,
Defend his freedom 'gainst a monarchy,
What will he do supported by a king?
(II.i.54-57)

There is nothing in Marlowe's sources that describes such a character as Zenocrate, or suggests that the Tartar had any capacity for such a pure love. The only account of Tamburlaine available to the poet from which he could have received the barest hint for the character is that of the Byzantine historian Chalcondylas.²⁰ Miss Ellis-Fermor paraphrases the pertinent passage as follows:

The wife of Themir, in Chalcondylas's history, is a woman of power and wisdom to whose judgment the Khan defers and whom he consults even upon matters of state and military policy. She tries to prevent a war between Pajasites and Themir and Themir listens to her advice and adopts a conciliatory attitude until the conduct of the Turkish ruler becomes unsufferable and she of her own accord gives consent to the war.²¹

Even if Marlowe had read Chalcondylas' account it is clear that
✓ Zenocrate is wholly his own addition to the career of Tamburlaine. And, as could be expected, [she plays a large part in the audience's accepting Tamburlaine.] Her major part in this acceptance we shall see later. Let
✓ us mention here only that Tamburlaine's [sincere love for Zenocrate tends

²⁰Clauserus, Laonice Chalcondylae Atheniensis, de origine et rebus gestis Turcorum Libri Decem, etc. (Basle, 1556).

²¹See her edition, p. 36.

to relax the natural antipathy towards him. True love and villainy were seldom joined in the same character this early in English drama. And the fact that Tamburlaine never has anything in mind but marriage and respects her virtue throughout the play, when he could have forced her to his will at any time, further enhances the virtuous side of his nature.]

In relation to this last, it might be well to mention here a device which Marlowe uses in order to remind the audience of Tamburlaine's virtues. At the same time he magnifies those virtues and to some extent belittles his hero's adversaries by making the latter seem ✓ unjust. [It is a common habit of mankind that when we hear someone falsely accused of something we immediately desire to defend him and feel a type of hostility toward the accuser.] For example, if, in our presence, a person whom we know to be eminently honest is accused of dishonesty by a person who is in a poorer position to know the facts than we, our first instinct is to disagree either verbally or mentally with the accuser. At the same time, we begin calling to mind all the instances in our memory of the accused's honesty. At that moment, he seems more honest than ever before, and the accuser begins dropping a few notches in our estimation, even before he has had a chance to prove his accusation. If the accusation is proved false, our estimation of the accused rises a little higher. Marlowe plays upon this facet of human nature time after time to gain sympathy for his hero. In the last two acts, he has the Soldan repeatedly accuse Tamburlaine of holding Zenocrate against her will as his concubine. Although the father's concern for his daughter can be understood by the audience, Tamburlaine's

true love for Zenocrate and the chasteness of their relationship is dramatically brought back to the audience's minds.

Marching to meet Cosroe and Tamburlaine, Meander pictures the latter's troops to be filled with "vile outrageous men,/ That live by rapine and by lawless spoil" (II.ii.22-23), and furthermore are

. . . void of martial discipline
All running headlong after greedy spoils,
And more regarding gain than victory.
(II.ii.44-46).

In most cases, this description of a band of thieves would be correct, but in this instance, as the audience already knows, Tamburlaine is not an ordinary bandit. His men have supreme confidence in him, his camp is well-ordered, and he disdains wealth. When Meander orders his soldiers to fling gold in every corner of the field:

And while the base-born Tartars take it up,
You, fighting more for honour than for gold,
Shall massacre those greedy minded slaves.
(II.ii-65-67)

the irony involved in his underestimating the virtues of his opponent is readily perceived by the audience.

The mistake that other characters make in thinking Tamburlaine a mere thief is nowhere made so dramatic as in the scene where Tamburlaine comes upon Mycetes attempting to hide his crown in a hole. Realizing how unequally they are matched, Tamburlaine disdains to take advantage of the situation and tells the weak-minded king that he will let him keep the crown until

I may see thee hemm'd with armed men.
Then shalt thou see me pull it from thy head;
Thou art no match for mighty Tamburlaine.
(II.iv.38-40)

Mycetes, realizing to whom he had been talking, is pointedly made to exclaim, "O gods, is this Tamburlaine the thief?/ I marvel much he stole it not away" (II.iv.41-42). In addition to furthering his characterization of the king as a simple-minded fool, Marlowe also impresses upon the audience a sense of manly fairness in the Scythian. The result is that here, as in other places, the dramatist presents Tamburlaine in the midst of unlawful activities in an admirable light. The hoped-for effect upon the audience is, at the least, to obscure the larger issue of the rebellion in the admiration for Tamburlaine's attributes.

When Bajazeth, a legal sovereign, attempts to halt the usurper Tamburlaine's march toward him by sending a basso to threaten him with "death and deadly arms," all he accomplishes is to accentuate his own pomposity and Tamburlaine's supreme confidence and courage.

✓ C. [Confidence In and Acceptance of Tamburlaine Within the Play]

One of the prime devices for motivating the audience into accepting and admiring Tamburlaine is the aura of confidence which surrounds him and the fact that [he is eventually accepted by every character in the play.] ✓ Marlowe endows Tamburlaine with an extreme sense of confidence in himself. No matter what the conqueror undertakes, there is never any question in his mind what the outcome will be. He is in control of fate; there is no possibility that he will fail:

. . . sooner shall the sun fall from his sphere
Than Tamburlaine be slain or overcome.
(I.ii.175-176)

Although he is but a shepherd and a bandit with a relatively small following, he says he is "strongly mov'd" that if he should desire the

Persian crown, "I could attain it with a wondrous ease" (II.v.75-77). Later in the play, when he faces the overwhelming number of Bajazeth's followers, he experiences no doubts about his ability to overcome such odds, and even feels a touch of pity for his opponent:

Alas, poor Turk! his fortune is too weak
T' encounter with the strength of Tamburlaine.
(III.iii.6-7)

This confidence is also mirrored in his followers. Usumcasane claims,

. . . kingdoms at the least we all expect,
Besides the honour in assured conquests,
Where kings shall crouch unto our conquering swords,
And hosts of soldiers stand amaz'd at us,
When with their fearful tongues they shall confess,
These are the men that all the world admires.
(I.ii.217-222)

Prior to their first martial victory in the play, Techelles says that if they were offered dukedoms by the Persian king, they would consider it a loss to make exchange for what "we are assured by our friend's success." Neither do they fear the enormous Turkish army:

The more he brings, the greater is the spoil;
(III.iii.23).

Let him bring millions infinite of men,
Unpeopling Western Africa and Greece,
Yet we assure us of the victory.
(III.iii.33-35)

Extreme confidence in himself or extensive bragging and boasting can make a character ridiculous, as in the case of the Miles Gloriosus type. But in the present instance where the action proves the confidence to be justified, this confidence tends to spread to the audience and induce admiration for the character. [Sustained confidence is contagious,

and once contracted, confidence is almost certain in time to link itself with respect and acceptance. Marlowe clearly shows that he was perfectly aware of this phenomenon. In the opening scene of the play, Theridamas is characterized as a man of importance in the Persian state--valiant, capable, a faithful and trusted subject:

The chiefest captain of Mycetes' host,
The hope of Persia, and the very legs
Whereon our state doth lean as on a staff,
That holds us up and foils our neighbor foes.
(I.i.58-61)

But when he meets with Tamburlaine, he is won over to the Scythian's side by verbal persuasions. If we look closely at these "persuasions," we find that they are nothing more than Tamburlaine's confident assertions of his assured destiny. Theridamas is at first taken with Tamburlaine's uncommon aspect:

Tamburlaine! A Scythian shepherd so embellished
With nature's pride and richest furniture!
(I.ii.154-155)

Immediately, he is exhorted to leave the king's service and join his superior force with that of the thief he has been ordered to destroy:

Forsake thy king and do but join with me,
And we will triumph over all the world.
I hold the Fates bound fast in iron chains,
And with my hand turn Fortune's wheel about,
And sooner shall the sun fall from his sphere
Than Tamburlaine be slain or overcome.
Draw forth thy sword, thou mighty man at arms,
Intending but to raze my charmed skin,
And Jove himself will stretch his hand from heaven
To ward the blow, and shield me safe from harm.
.....
And as a sure and grounded argument
That I shall be the Monarch of the East,
He sends this Soldan's daughter rich and brave,
To be my queen and portly emperress.

If thou wilt stay with me, renowned man,
 And lead thy thousand horse with my conduct,
 Besides thy share of this Egyptian prize,
 Those thousand horse shall sweat with martial spoil
 Of conquered kingdoms and of cities sacked.
 Both we will walk upon the lofty cliffs,
 And Christian merchants, that with Russian stems
 Plough up huge furrows in the Caspian Sea,
 Shall vail to us as lords of all the lake.
 Both we will reign as consuls of the earth,
 And mighty kings shall be our senators;

 Join with me now in this my mean estate,

 And when my name and honour shall be spread,
 As far as Boreas claps his brazen wings,
 Or fair Bootes sends his cheerful light,
 Then shalt thou be competitor with me,
 And sit with Tamburlaine in all his majesty.
 (I.ii.171-208)

There is a compelling majesty in these confident assertions of
 Tamburlaine, and it affects Theridamas as it is supposed to affect us:

Not Hermes, prolocutor to the gods,
 Could use persuasions more pathetic.
 (I.ii.209-210)

The Persian is wavering, but is not yet wholly persuaded. Then Techelles
 and Usumacasane echo their leader's vein and Theridamas is just about
 won:

What strong enchantments tice my yielding soul?
 Ah, these resolved noble Scythians!
 (I.ii.223-224)

Notice Marlowe's choice of the word enchantments; it truthfully
 describes what the emphasis upon Tamburlaine's confidence is calculated
 to effect. At the last minute, Theridamas hesitates, realizing, as the
 audience is most certainly aware during this scene, that his joining
 forces with Tamburlaine is an act of treason: "But shall I prove a
 traitor to my king?" Tamburlaine's answer, "No, but the trusty friend

of Tamburlaine," extinguishes Theridamas' final qualms, and he is won over as we are supposed to be, at least tentatively so. But Marlowe is not so naive as to think that the audience has strongly accepted Tamburlaine at this point in the play. Rather, in a skillful development of character, he leaves Theridamas a little doubtful of what he has done. When they are joined by Cosroe and his followers, Theridamas makes an awkward attempt to defend his actions:

You see, my lord, what working words he hath.
But, when you see his actions top his speech,
Your speech will stay, or so extol his worth
As I shall be commended and excused
For turning my poor charge to his direction.
And these his two renowned friends, my lord,
Would make one thrust and strive to be retain'd
In such a great degree of amity.

(II.iii.25-32)

From this point on, he succumbs by stages to the aura of confidence in which Tamburlaine moves. And all the while [he is still characterized as a rational and basically just man, thus suggesting to the audience that what Theridamas does any one of them would do if he were in the same circumstances. Significantly, Marlowe has Theridamas capitulate completely in the scene immediately preceding the battle with Bajazeth. This is the scene in which Marlowe makes his most concerted effort to gain sympathy for his hero.] Theridamas says, echoing that confidence which had formerly been restricted to the speeches of Tamburlaine, Techelles, and Usumacasane,

Even he, that in a trice vanquished two kings
More mighty than the Turkish emperor,
Shall rouse him out of Europe, and pursue
His scattered army till they yield or die.

(III.iii.36-39)

And Tamburlaine, noticing the full confidence and final acceptance, says not only to Theridamas, but to all those in the audience who have been following him,

Well said, Theridamas! speak in that mood;
For Will and Shall best fitteth Tamburlaine,
Whose smiling stars gives him assured hope
Of martial triumph ere he meet his foes.

(III.iii.40-43)

✓ [Of more importance than Theridamas in gaining acceptance for Tamburlaine is the character of Zenocrate. This is one of the main reasons for Marlowe's invention of her part in the action. She is a princess, beautiful, intelligent, well-mannered, cultured, virtuous; in all respects she is a near perfect ideal of femininity, at least from a man's point of view, and is always presented in a sympathetic and admirable light. Her first appearance upon the stage cannot but gain for her the audience's sympathy: a young, defenseless princess robbed and held captive by a thief. Since she remains admirable to the audience throughout the play and, by her background and personal virtues, should be a good representative of traditional morality, her acceptance of and love for Tamburlaine has a great influence upon the audience's feelings toward the Scythian.]

In their first interview, though he is dressed as a shepherd and has just robbed her, she realizes that there is something extraordinary about Tamburlaine and unconsciously calls him, "my lord--for so you do import." And in her second appearance on the stage, which follows shortly after Tamburlaine has rebelled against Cosroe, we find that she has fallen in love with her captor, preferring him over the King of

Arabia to whom she is betrothed. She lightens considerably the charge of kidnapping against Tamburlaine by defending him against the accusations of Agydas:

. . . speak of Tamburlaine as he deserves.
 The entertainment we have had of him
 If far from villany or servitude,
 And might in noble minds be counted princely.
 (III.ii.36-39)

Zenocrate's confidence in the Scythian is as strong as that of his lieutenants. In the "flyting" scene between her and Zabina, while the armies of Tamburlaine and the Turk are doing battle offstage, Zenocrate declares that should Mahomet himself come down from heaven and swear that her lord is slain or conquered, he could not persuade her otherwise, "but that he lives and will be conqueror" (III.iii.208-211). Her acceptance of Tamburlaine finally becomes so complete that even though he has just massacred her countrymen against her pleas at Damascus and is about to do battle with her father, her first desire is for the success of Tamburlaine:

. . . for a final issue to my griefs,
 To pacify my country and my love,
 Must Tamburlaine by their resistless powers,
 With virtue of a gentle victory,
 Conclude a league of honour to my hope;
 Then, as the powers divine have pre-ordained,
 With happy safety of my father's life
 Send like defence of fair Arabia.
 (V.ii.333-340)

✓ [Such extreme confidence in and full acceptance of the Scythian's destiny by every member of his entourage persuasively invites the audience to share the same attitude. More important, however, to achieving the almost hypnotic effect the dramatist desires to accomplish with this

device is the fact that Tamburlaine's high destiny is accepted not only by his friends, but also by his enemies.] Cosroe says,

Nature doth strive with Fortune and his stars
To make him famous in accomplished worth:
And well his merits shew him to be made
His fortune's master and the king of men.
(II.i.33-36)

Although he has just been defeated in battle by Tamburlaine, the Soldan tells him,

Mighty hath God and Mahomet made thy hand,
Renowned Tamburlaine, to whom all kings
Of force must yield their crown and emperies;
And I am pleased with this my overthrow,
If as beseems a person of thy state,
Thou hast with honour used Zenocrate.
(V.ii.417-422)

There are no regrets, no mention of Tamburlaine's crimes, or even a word of his low birth. The Soldan is pleased with the outcome of things; and he had been previously characterized as a brave, loving father who fought Tamburlaine mainly to avenge what he thought had been the rape of his daughter.

✓ [Perhaps the most important acceptance is that of Bajazeth, Tamburlaine's most bitter enemy, who had lost his great empire to the Scythian, had been kept in the most servile captivity, but who had never once accepted his fate.] Just before he kills himself, however, he puts aside his pride and admits to his wife the inevitability of Tamburlaine's divinely inspired victories:

Ah, fair Zabina, we may curse his power,
The heavens may frown, the earth for anger quake;
But such a star hath influence in his sword
As rules the skies and countermands the gods
More than Cimmerian Styx or Destiny.
(V.ii.167-171)

✓ [Thus, Tamburlaine's power and victories are accepted by every character of any stature in the play, if not without enmity, at least as inevitable. Marlowe guided the audience to a similar acceptance by inviting them, in effect, to follow the characters' example.]

✓ D. Characterization of Tamburlaine's Opponents.]

At the same time that he is emphasizing Tamburlaine's virtues, Marlowe endows the conqueror's opponents, the legal and true authority against which Tamburlaine is rebelling, with traits which by comparison set off the virtues of the hero. Marlowe is here using with considerable skill the politician's perennial strategy: [if you cannot make yourself appear 14-carat to the voters, paint your opponents in such a fashion that you will seem the best of a bad lot.]

With no authority from his sources, Marlowe characterized Mycetes, the Persian king, as a weak, cowardly simpleton. We have seen that in the Elizabethan scheme of things it was the duty of the nobleman, especially the king, to govern properly those under him and to set a virtuous example for them to follow. Mycetes is clearly not the ideal or even anywhere near it. Far from evoking any respect from the audience, he is more apt to have been looked on with contempt, certainly with ridicule, by the Elizabethans. In a play in which words are given so conspicuous a place, in threats, in avowal of power, and in ordinary discourse, Mycetes, in the opening speech of the play, asks his brother's aid in expressing what is bothering him:

Brother Cosroe, I find myself agriev'd;
Yet insufficient to express the same,

For it requires a great and thundering speech:
(I.i.1-3).

His inability to cope with a situation of the least consequence is immediately apparent. He is characterized as completely impotent from the very beginning, and Marlowe points up the difference in character between the simpleton who is a king and Tamburlaine who desires to be a king by two parallel passages based upon bestial imagery. Mycetes, in ordering Meander to declare the cause of his grief, makes use of a foolish figure which suggests that he is a goose in comparison with Tamburlaine,

That, like a fox in midst of harvest-time,
Doth prey upon my flocks of passingers,
And, as I hear, doth mean to pull my plumes:
(I.i.31-33).

In the next scene, at Tamburlaine's camp, this passage is recalled and the Tartar chief's character is further enhanced at the expense of the Persian king when Techelles describes his leader as a lion:

As princely lions when they rouse themselves,
Stretching their paws, and threatening herds of beasts,
So in his armour looketh Tamburlaine.
(I.ii.52-54)

Marlowe's characterization of Mycetes serves three purposes:

(1) the obvious comparison between him and Tamburlaine gives the Scythian an almost infinite advantage; (2) by making the Persian king so ignominious, the dramatist allows himself a wider range in which to make Tamburlaine's successive opponents of a progressively greater magnitude; (3) the comparison between Mycetes and Cosroe shows the latter off to good advantage.

The last is more important to our inquiry than it would at first seem. Not only does the contrast between the brothers make Tamburlaine's second victory greater than the first, but it also tends to make the audience accept the rebellion of Cosroe. This is important to the poet's success in gaining acceptance for his hero. If the audience feels that Cosroe is justified in taking the crown from his witless brother, they cannot blame Tamburlaine for his actions against Mycetes. Further, Cosroe's initial acceptance of Tamburlaine will have greater weight upon them. And it is by Cosroe that Tamburlaine is taken out of the ranks of thieves:

Thee do I make my regent of Persia,
And general lieutenant of my armies.
(II.v.8-9)

A few lines farther he speaks of him as "Lord Tamburlaine."

Marlowe takes care to give some justification to Cosroe's assuming the crown. As a result of Mycetes' weak rule, the great Persian empire is disintegrating. Cosroe tells his brother that the Babylonians

. . . will revolt from Persian government,
Unless they have a wiser king than you.
(I.i.91-92)

Describing the situation more fully, he states that

. . . our neighborers that were wont to quake
And tremble at the Persian monarch's name,
Now sits and laughs our regiment to scorn;
.
Men from the farthest equinoctial line
Have swarm'd in troops into the Eastern India,
Lading their ships with gold and precious stones,
And made their spoils from all our provinces.
(I.i.115-122)

The country has fallen in such dire straits by Mycetes' ignorant mismanagement, that the restless and dissatisfied populace "openly exclaim against the king," and "begin in troops to threaten civil war" (I.i. 148-149). It is made clear that the crowning of Cosroe is not just a manifestation of his own ambition; rather, he is crowned by a group of nobles

. . . in the name of other Persian states
And commons of this mighty monarchy.
(I.i.137-138)

And Ceneus gives the immediate reason: "to stay all sudden mutinies." Thus, Cosroe receives the crown not by any direct action on his part, but through the will of the Persian nobility and commons for the good of the country. Without any evidence to the contrary, we must accept his own stated motives when he accepts the crown:

Well, since I see the state of Persia droop
And languish in my brother's government,
I willingly receive th' imperial crown,
And vow to wear it for my country's good.
(I.i.155-158)

Marlowe makes a strong attempt at insuring the audience's acceptance of Cosroe by having Meander accept his authority. Although Mycetes is never heard from after his defeat, his chief counselor and most faithful and loyal subject, Meander,--the personification of traditional ethics--says to Cosroe immediately following the battle,

Most happy emperor, in humblest terms
I vow my service to your majesty,
With utmost virtue of my faith and duty.
(II.v.15-17)

Besides this function of motivating the audience's acceptance of Cosroe, Meander's appearance after the battle serves no possible purpose.

✓ [Once Cosroe ceases to be of benefit to Tamburlaine and becomes an obstacle in the Scythian's upward climb, Marlowe turns the audience antagonistic toward the Persian in one swift slash.] As he is leaving the battlefield to "ride in triumph through Persepolis," Cosroe says that after Tamburlaine meets him there,

Then will we march to all those Indian mines
 My witless brother to the Christians lost,
 And ransom them with fame and usury.
 (II.v.41-43)

✓ [By characterizing Cosroe as a vicious enemy to Christendom, a device he later uses to a much greater extent in relation to Bajazeth, Marlowe elicits sympathy from his audience for Tamburlaine, even though Tamburlaine was himself no Christian.] It is at this point in the play that the former thief announces his intention to challenge Cosroe's crown. Without such an appeal to the audience's religious outrage, this would be nothing but treacherous rebellion against a sovereign who has already shown himself to be competent and interested in his country's fortunes. It is also at this point that we find an example of the manner in which Marlowe smooths over many clearly sinful acts of the historical Tamburlaine by manipulation of the very standards which condemn them. Elizabethan ideals were very rigid about keeping faith. "The most disloyal, traitorous, and vnfaithful men in the world," says Cleland, "cannot denie but that faith is the band of all humane societie, and the foundation of al Iustice, and that aboue al things it should be most religiously kept."²² A promise sworn in the name of God is, if broken, a

²²Cleland, p. 129.

promise broken not to man but to God. Man should not speak otherwise than as he truly believes and as he will act. Such a rule seems to set up very definite limits upon a man's actions and perhaps the sixteenth century thought it as clear and simple as it purports to be; however, the manner in which Marlowe manipulates this commonplace in the play puts it in an entirely different light. When the Scythian betrays Cosroe, he is committing an audacious breach of faith. Yet notice the decision Marlowe forces upon the audience by characterizing Cosroe as an oppressor of Christians immediately before Tamburlaine turns on him. Should Tamburlaine keep faith and aid Cosroe to wage war upon Christians, or should he be applauded for turning against him and thereby protecting Christians? Surely there would be some hesitation among the audience to condemn outright this action of Tamburlaine.

Again without authority from his sources, which unanimously point up Bajazeth's courage and honor, [Marlowe makes him a proud, pompous, vain monarch--almost to the point of burlesque--a model of the type of unfortunate princes the moralists loved to describe.] Our first sight of Bajazeth is at the siege of Constantinople where he has just learned that Tamburlaine means to meet him in battle. As he instructs one of his bassos to intercept Tamburlaine and make a truce with him so that the Turks will not have to interrupt their siege of the city, he lists unnecessarily all his titles, seemingly for no other purpose than to hear them pronounced:

Hie thee, my basso, fast to Persia.
Tell him thy lord, the Turkish emperor,
Dread lord of Afric, Europe and Asia,
Great king and conqueror of Graecia,

The ocean, Terrene, and the coal-black sea,
 The high and highest monarch of the world,
 Wills and commands (for say not I entreat),
 Not once to set his foot to Africa,
 Or spread his colours in Graecia,
 Lest he incur the fury of my wrath.

(III.i.21-30)

This characterization is completed in the same scene when his contributory kings begin flattering him and he foolishly soaks in all their impossible compliments and adds to them himself. Angier tells him that "all flesh quakes at your magnificence." Bajazeth answers, "True, Angier, and tremble at my looks." The king of Morocco, not to be outdone, adds,

The spring is hindered by your smothering host;
 For neither rain can fall upon the earth,
 Nor sun reflex his virtuous beams thereon,
 The ground is mantled with such multitudes.

(III.i.50-53)

And Bajazeth agrees:

All this is true as holy Mahomet;
 And all the trees are blasted with our breaths.

It is difficult to believe that the delicious irony of the last line is not intended.

Although it is not dwelt upon by his sources, Marlowe emphasizes the fact that Constantinople is saved by Tamburlaine's defeat of Bajazeth. In the Turk's first speech, he accuses Tamburlaine of thinking "to rouse us from our dreadful siege/ Of the famous Grecian Constantinople" (III.i.5-6). And by having Bajazeth describe the measures he has taken to conquer the city, Marlowe makes it clear that nothing short of a miracle, like the unexpected appearance of Tamburlaine, would have

saved the city. Bajazeth says, significantly in his last speech before meeting Tamburlaine,

I will the captive pioners of Argier
Cut off the water that by leaden pipes
Runs to the city from the mountain Carnon;
Two thousand horse shall forage up and down,
That no relief or succour come by land,
And all the sea my galleys countermand.
Then shall our footmen lie within the trench,
And with their cannons, mouth'd like Orcus' gulf,
Batter the walls, and we will enter in;
And thus the Grecians shall be conquered.
(III.i.58-67)

Both Fortescue and Whetstone describe Tamburlaine as the scourge of God, but in both cases the appellation is claimed by Tamburlaine after the massacre of a delegation of women and children from a city unnamed in the sources, an event which historically took place some time after the defeat of Bajazeth and which Marlowe assigns to the taking of Damascus. By transferring the scourge motif to the Bajazeth episode, Marlowe is attempting to gain sympathy for Tamburlaine by making him the instrument of God's revenge on the Turk. When Tamburlaine first claims the title of "scourge," he reminds the audience of the atrocities committed on the Christians by the Turks and unhistorically promises to free the captive Christians whose physical sufferings at the hands of the infidel are graphically described:

I that am term'd the Scourge and Wrath of God,
The only fear and terror of the world,
Will first subdue the Turk, and then enlarge
Those Christian captives which you keep as slaves,
Burdening their bodies with your heavy chains,
And feeding them with thin and slender fare,
That naked row about the Terrene sea,
And, when they chance to breathe and rest a space,
Are punished with bastones so grievously
That they lie panting on the galley's side,
And strive for life at every stroke they give.

These are the cruel pirates of Argier,
 That damned train, the scum of Africa,
 Inhabited with straggling runagates,
 That make quick havoc of the Christian blood.
 But, as I live, that town shall curse the time
 That Tamburlaine set foot in Africa.

(III.iii.44-60)

[As Tamburlaine finishes this speech, Bajazeth and his bassos arrive on-stage to do battle.] This must have had the same effect upon the groundlings and middle-class segment of the audience as if two years later, in 1589, Philip of Spain had walked on an English stage after someone had recounted the events of the Armada and the Jesuit plots against Queen Elizabeth's life.

[At this dramatic moment, when the audience has been urged into a particularly resentful mood against the Turks, we have no difficulty imagining the jeers of the spectators in reaction to the superciliousness of Bajazeth's behavior.] He first reminds his guard to attend upon his person, "the greatest potentate of Africa," and immediately considers himself insulted when Tamburlaine says that he means to "encounter with that Bajazeth:"

Kings of Fesse, Morocco, and Argier,
 He calls me Bajazeth, whom you call lord!
 Note the presumption of this Scythian slave!
 I tell thee, villain, those that lead my horse
 Have to their names titles of dignity:
 And dar'st thou bluntly call me Bajazeth?

(III.iii.66-71)

Nor do the contributory kings gain any sympathy from the audience in this scene, for they show themselves as just so many little imitations of their lord:

Fez. What means the mighty Turkish emperor,
 To talk with one so base as Tamburlaine?

Mor. Ye Moors and valiant men of Barbary,
How can ye suffer these indignities?

Arg. Leave words, and let them feel your lances' points,
Which glided through the bowels of the Greeks.
(III.iii.87-92)

The last line is another pointed reference to make Tamburlaine seem an ally of the Christians.

✓ [Marlowe does not allow the audience to forget this Turk versus Christian theme while the principals are offstage doing battle.] Zabina tells Zenocrate that she hears the trumpets sound

As when my emperor overthrew the Greeks,
And led them captive into Africa.
(III.iii.204-205)

And to insure the continued ill will of the audience for the Turk after he has been conquered, the dramatist makes Bajazeth rage and threaten:

Now will the Christian miscreants be glad,
Ringing with joy their superstitious bells,
And making bonfires for my overthrow:
But, ere I die, those foul idolaters
Shall make me bonfires with their filthy bones.
(III.iii.236-240)

Characterizing Tamburlaine as an ally to the Christians and God's scourge of infidels is a calculated attempt to make the audience disregard the fact that Tamburlaine has waged offensive war against a legal monarch, and enjoy the later base treatment of the proud Turk. At a crucial spot, Marlowe makes sure that the audience does not forget that Tamburlaine is, among other things, an agent of God. As Tamburlaine steps on Bajazeth's back, using him as a footstool, following much unreasonably cruel taunting, he calls for the gods to behold "Their scourge and terror tread on emperors" (IV.ii.32). During the whole of

Bajazeth's confinement, Marlowe keeps our sympathy for him at a minimum by never showing us the Turk's misery from his own point of view. All we hear from Bajazeth are curses which seem out of place in his situation.

Although the cold-blooded cruelty of the event makes it improbable that Tamburlaine's responsibility could be lessened, Marlowe makes an attempt to place at least some of the blame for the virgins' deaths on the Governor of Damascus by having the victims themselves blame him

If humble suits or imprecations
 (Uttered with tears of wretchedness and blood
 Shed from the heads and hearts of all our sex,
 Some made your wives, and some your children,)
 Might have entreated your obdurate breasts
 To entertain some care of our securities
 Whiles only danger beat upon our walls,
 These more than dangerous warrents of our death
 Had never been erected as they be,
 Nor you depend on such weak helps as we.
 (V.i.24-33)

In their view, it is only because of the pride and obstinacy of the governor and his councilors that their lives are in danger. This same reproachfulness is repeated in their leader's plea to Tamburlaine when the governor is called "ruthless" for having refused Tamburlaine's mercy (V.ii.29-30).

✓ [E. The Poetic Element.]

It has been stated, and rightly so, by almost every dramatic historian that Marlowe's main contribution to the development of English drama was his ability to mould blank verse into a highly successful vehicle of dramatic expression. Marlowe is largely responsible for the

almost unbelievably rapid development of this type of verse in the later years of the sixteenth century. Although some of Marlowe's blank verse is still among the finest ever written, it is difficult for us, having ✓ first read Shakespeare and Milton, to realize [the effect the sheer poetry in Tamburlaine must have had on those first audiences early in 1587.]

The opening lines of the prologue contain a direct invitation to the audience to pay close attention to the language in the play and an open challenge to compare it with what they were used to hearing on the stage:

From jiggling veins of riming mother wits,
And such conceits as clownage keeps in pay,
We'll lead you to the stately tent of war,
Where you shall hear the Scythian Tamburlaine
Threatening the world with high astounding terms
And scourging kingdoms with his conquering sword.

He is evidently referring to the verse plays of the popular stage which were usually written in fourteen syllable lines rhymed in couplets. For comparison, here is a quotation taken at random from Cambises, a play which, because of many similarities in plot and characterization, Marlowe's play would have brought to an Elizabethan's mind:

I am the king of Persia, a large and fertile soile;
The Egyptians against us repugne as varlets slave and vile;
Therefore I mean with Marsis hart with wars them to frequent,
Them to subdue as captives mine,--this is my hearts intent;
So shall I win honors delight, and praise of me shall go.
My Councell, speake,--and, lording, eke:--is it not best do so?
(15-20)²³

²³John Matthews Manly, Specimens of Pre-Shakespearean Drama, 2 Vols. (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1897), p. 163.

The difference is easily seen. The lines from Cambises contain many awkward constructions, the meaning in places is not evident, and the jogging quality of the lines, each couplet duplicating exactly the rhythm of a ballad quatrain, achieves an almost ludicrous effect. On the other hand, Marlowe's verse has a regular syntax, is highly articulate, and has a driving power in its rhythm. Nearly as much difference can be seen when Marlowe's verse is compared with the blank verse which preceded his. Before Marlowe, blank verse was used very sparingly on the popular stage and then only as a conscious affectation of classic style, like Peele's putting Paris' oration to the gods in The Arraign-ment of Paris into blank verse. For complete dramas in blank verse, one has to go to the Inns of Court or the Universities. Gascoigne and Kinwelmarsh's Jocasta will serve as illustration:

Thou trustie guide of my so trustlesse steppes
 Deer daughter mine go we, lead thou ye way,
 For since the day I first did leese this light
 Thou only art the light of these mine eyes:
 And for thou knowst I am both old & weake
 And ever longing after lonely rest,
 Direct my steppes amynd the playnest pathes,
 That so my febled feete may feelee lesse paine.

(III.i.1-8)²⁴

This is better than most, but it still has a note of affectation, has a plodding rhythm, and in common with its fellows is monotonous, almost prosaic, with nothing approaching the gorgeous Marlovian imagery. Marlowe's verse, in contrast, has a musical quality with its varied rhythms inside the line, and the presence of such agencies as the alexandrine,

²⁴John W. Cunliffe, ed., Early English Classical Tragedies (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1912), p. 112.

the nine-syllable line, and the tetrameter.²⁵ It should always be remembered that Marlowe's lyricism was something unique for the drama at this time. Thus, the first audience of Tamburlaine heard sounds totally new for drama and infinitely more pleasing than they had been used to.

- ✓ Looked at in this light, [the very poetic quality of the play cannot but have helped to gain a more favorable reception for the character who voices most of the lines. And it is interesting that Marlowe places his most powerful and gorgeous lyricism in places where it is needed most.] For example, after hearing that the virgins have been killed and their bodies hoisted up on Damascus' walls, Tamburlaine tells his men to "put the rest to the sword." Then, immediately turning his thoughts to Zenocrate, in a tender and loving tone, he begins,

Ah, fair Zenocrate, divine Zenocrate,
Fair is too foul an epithet for thee,
(V.ii.72-73)

and proceeds for almost fifty lines of uninterrupted purple passages and rolling similes, including the "unrimed sonnet" which begins,

What is beauty, saith my sufferings, then?
If all the pens that ever poets held
Had fed the feeling of their masters' thoughts,
(V.ii.97-99)

ending with the statement that he

Shall give the world to note, for all my birth,
That virtue solely is the sum of glory,
And fashions men with true nobility.
(V.ii.125-127)

²⁵See C. F. Tucker Brooke, "Marlowe's Versification and Style," Studies in Philology, XIX (1922), pp. 190 ff.

At this point, if there was anyone in the audience who was not swept up into the mood of exhilaration implicit in this long speech and who, at the same time, was not overawed by the magic of the "mighty line" into qualifying his reactions to the virgins' massacre, he had no reason for [wasting an afternoon listening to grown men making fools out of themselves spouting uncommon language from a wooden platform.]

It might be mentioned in connection with the scene in which the virgins are killed that Marlowe forgoes any lyricism in their plaint and makes it somewhat stiff and formal:

Pity our plights! O, pity poor Damascus!
 Pity old age, within whose silver hairs
 Honour and reverence evermore have reign'd,
 Pity the marriage bed. . . .

(V.ii.17-20)

These lines are more like the quotation from Jocasta than typical Marlovian verse. But this is not the only use the poet makes of differing tones to advance his plan of apotheosis. The sustained magnificence in Tamburlaine's speeches comes immediately to mind, as does Bajazeth's superciliousness. The most precise use of tone, however, comes in the first act when Marlowe has the problem of keeping the audience sympathetic toward Cosroe while at the same time using Cosroe to tear down their sympathy toward Mycetes. Cosroe's rough words to Mycetes that he doesn't have enough sense to rule would be accepted by the audience, for it is evident that Cosroe is merely telling the truth. But Cosroe's direct mockery of his brother--"You may do well to kiss it then"--would not be easily accepted, and Marlowe is aware of this as Mycetes complains,

O where is duty and allegiance now?
 Fled to the Caspian or the Ocean main?
 What, shall I call thee brother? no, a foe,
 Monster of nature, shame unto thy stock,
 That darst presume thy sovereign for to mock!
 (I.i.101-105)

These are strong, indignant words and for a moment we wonder if Mycetes has not been misjudged by his brother. But then the extreme whining quality of Mycetes' next line assures us that there has been no mistake and goes far to lessen the effect of the accusation:

Meander, come, I am abus'd Meander.

The success of the poetry in the play owes a great deal to its wealth of imagery. Marion B. Smith has counted a total of 302 images in the play, a high average of one image to every 7.69 lines.²⁶ [By concentrating most of this elaborate imagery in Tamburlaine's speeches or in descriptions of him, Marlowe increases his hero's stature considerably. When a minor character holds the stage, a marked falling off in imagery is immediately perceptible.]²⁷

Much has already been made of the uses to which Marlowe puts imagery in his plan for apotheosis, but there remains another interesting method he follows in adapting imagery to his needs. [While the great majority of the images in Tamburlaine's lines come from the heavens or classical heroes, Bajazeth's usually come from the underworld and classical monsters.] The comparison is especially evident in the scene

²⁶Marion B. Smith, Marlowe's Imagery and the Marlowe Canon (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1940), p. 204. See Chart I.

²⁷Smith, p. 15.

before the battle. Bajazeth describes his sons as having

. . . limbs more large and of a bigger size
Than all the brays y-sprung from Typhon's lions;
(III.iii.108-109).

Then speaking of his army, he says,

And as the heads of Hydra, so my power,
Subdued, shall stand as mighty as before.
If they should yield their necks unto the sword,
Thy soldiers' arms could not endure to strike
So many blows as I have heads for thee.
(III.iii.140-144)

By his using such images, Bajazeth associates himself and his army with hell and the powers of evil, an association which, as Marlowe knew, his contemporaries were already prone to make in relation to the dreaded Turks. Tamburlaine then describes his army:

My camp is like to Julius Caesar's host,
That never fought but had the victory;
Nor in Pharsalia was there such hot war
As these my followers willingly would have.
(III.iii.152-155)

The contrast and effect thereof may be readily imagined.

In the same fashion, Marlowe contrasts the light and dark
✓ imagery in the speeches of these two. [Tamburlaine's speeches usually point upward into light, while Bajazeth's point of view is usually aimed downwards into darkness.] This is especially evident in two successive speeches in the fourth act. As Bajazeth gets down on his hands and knees to act as Tamburlaine's footstool, he says,

Then as I look down to the damned fiends,
Fiends, look on me! and thou, dread god of hell,
With ebon sceptre strike this hateful earth,
And make it swallow both of us at once!
(IV.ii.26-29)

Bajazeth's speech directs the audience's attention to the underworld with its connotations of darkness and gloom. But with Tamburlaine's immediately ensuing speech, as he steps upon the Turk's back, the audience's thoughts are reversed upwards into the light of the firmament and towards heaven:

Now clear the triple region of the air,
 And let the majesty of heaven behold
 Their scourge and terror tread upon emperors.
 Smile, stars that reign'd at my nativity,
 And dim the brightness of their neighbouring lamps;
 Disdain to borrow light of Cynthia,
 For I, the chiefest lamp of all the earth,
 First rising in the east with mild aspect,
 But fixed now in the meridian line,
 Will send up fire to your turning spheres,
 And cause the sun to borrow light of you.
 (IV.ii.30-40)

The effect is like stepping out of a dark and damp cave into the hot sunlight of a summer afternoon.

There is no denying that the power of the poetry is an important force in the impression one receives from Tamburlaine. Though perhaps the most immediately impressive part of the complete design, it is still only a part and cannot be given single credit for the effect of the whole, as many critics seem to believe. The effect of the poetry depends just as much upon the other components of the total design as they in turn are dependent upon the poetry for their maximum effect. In fact, without the underlying support of the constant interrelated patterns which have been examined, the power ascribed to the blank verse would, in many instances, have a doubtful effect. For example, much of the power of the lines can be ascribed to hyperbolical assertions. The audience's reaction to these lines, however, depends as much upon the

character who voices them as it does upon the lines themselves. In Henry V, Shakespeare imitates the assertions of Tamburlaine but puts them in the mouth of a blustering coward, Pistol. The effect is not exhilaration, but comedy. In our own play, Bajazeth also speaks in high astounding terms but without the effect upon the audience that Tamburlaine achieves. The difference is that unlike Tamburlaine, Bajazeth lacks the underlying foundations to support his assertions.

Thus far, I have tried to show how Christopher Marlowe, in Tamburlaine I, took a known historical personage who was an unlawful tyrant in the eyes of the Elizabethans and, without distorting those actions which made him despicable, presented him upon the stage in such a fashion as to elicit the audience's admiration. A discussion of the Elizabethan intellectual milieu in connection with the actions of Tamburlaine, both in history and on the stage, suggested the difficulties with which the dramatist was faced by his choice of subject matter. By investigating the plot, characterization, ideas, and imagery of the play in search of the devices used to effect admiration for Tamburlaine, we have seen that there is contained in Tamburlaine, Part I a comprehensive design of apotheosis which pervades every element in the play's structure and is intricately interrelated by a conscious manipulation of devices as simple as the easy defeat of mighty armies and as detailed and delicate as the echoing of vowel sounds. Marlowe was the first to use effectively on the English stage the majority of these devices.

The effect Tamburlaine, Part I has upon an audience, be it Elizabethan or modern, is the result, not of a great lyrical personality

which carries everything blindly before it, but of a well-designed, comprehensive plan executed perfectly.

IV

Now that we have dealt with Marlowe's biggest problem in presenting the story of Tamburlaine to an Elizabethan audience, we can proceed in the present chapter to the [other major problem which confronted the dramatist]-to make sure that when the audience left the theatre it was not so completely carried away in its admiration for the stupendous figure of a conqueror it had been watching as to be moved to condone morally all his acts. Marlowe did not intend to present the Scythian's career as an ideal to be admired in toto. On the contrary, it was just as important to Marlowe's purposes that the audience should leave the theatre with a critical awareness of the bloody horrors of Tamburlaine's career, as that they should have been stirred to an admiration for the conqueror. Simply stated, [Marlowe wished to impress upon his audience the vision of a magnificent human being who acted in a way unworthy of his own greatness--a man capable of mounting the highest possible level of achievement, but perverting that capability by mistaking what constitutes the highest perfection available to man. And herein lies the tragedy of Tamburlaine the Great.]

In order to understand what Marlowe had in mind, we must again advert to contemporary ideas; not, however, to those which belonged to traditional moral theory. Rather we must here outline some of the new ideas, which from our own vantage point in time seem distinctive of Renaissance thought in general, but which in reality were still very

live issues in sixteenth-century England. Indeed it is doubtful that they had yet been disseminated through the general consciousness of Marlowe's audience sufficiently to qualify materially the traditional ideas.

There was in the inherited, Medieval Christian view of man and his place in the universe a dichotomy between man's dignity and his wretchedness. He was made in the image of God, he contained an immortal soul, he was the highest created being below the angels, the being for whom the rest of the universe was created; yet through original sin he had lost the perfection of his original creation, was damned to the everlasting pains of hell except for Divine intervention, and was at the mercy of sickness, death, and his own weak nature. Some Renaissance thinkers took a fresh look at man's nature and position in the scheme of things and concluded that the conflict was a result of emphasis. Henceforward greater emphasis needed to be placed upon the dignity of man. Certainly the beginnings of such a doctrine can be found in Petrarch or Coluccio Salutati, but for our purposes we may say that it was given its first important formulation by Nikolaus Cusanus (1401-1464). In dealing with the doctrine of the chain of being, Cusanus is struck by the unique position occupied by man and formulates a departure from the traditional view of man's nature:

Now the order of things manifestly requires that certain entities be of an inferior nature, like those that have neither life nor intelligence; that certain others be of a superior nature, those of pure intelligence; and that certain others occupy a position intermediate between these two. If then the absolute maximum is the most universal thing--the entity of all things--and not of some to the exclusion of others, it is clear that that being can best associate itself with the maximum which has most in

common with the universality of beings.¹

Thus, intermediate nature, i.e., man, is by Cusanus asserted to be not only potentially superior to the angels, but even capable of elevation to the very Godhead itself:

. . . intermediate nature, which is the connecting link between inferior and superior, is alone capable of elevation to the maximum in a way, through the power of the maximum, suitable to God. . . .²

This glorified idea of man's nature was picked up and expanded upon by Marsilio Ficino (1433-1499), whose incorporation of it into his Neo-Platonic system made the concept part of the solid basis for the subsequent development of Italian Humanist thought. But it fell to Ficino's younger contemporary and associate, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463-1494), to give the doctrine its most influential and characteristic statement. In his Oration on the Dignity of Man, Pico supposes God's having said to Adam in the Garden:

Neither a fixed abode nor a form that is thine alone nor any function peculiar to thyself have we given thee, Adam, to the end that according to thy judgment thou mayest have and possess what abode, what form, and what functions thou thyself shalt desire. The nature of all other beings is limited and constrained within the bounds of laws prescribed by Us. Thou, constrained by no limits, in accordance with thine own free will, in whose hand We have placed thee, shalt ordain for thyself the limits of thy nature. . . . We have made thee neither of heaven nor of earth, neither mortal nor immortal, so that with freedom of choice and with honor, as though the

¹De Docta Ignorantia. Quoted by Gordon W. O'Brien, Renaissance Poetics and the Problem of Power (Chicago: Institute of Elizabethan Studies, 1956), p. 73.

²De Docta Ignorantia. Quoted by O'Brien, p. 75.

maker and molder of thyself, thou mayest fashion thyself
in whatever shape thou shalt prefer.³

As this idea became more common among the Italians, the traditional idea of man's dependence upon God became in inverse proportion less important in their writings. What they were interested in was what man himself could achieve without supernatural help.⁴ His will is completely free; there are no limits prescribed for him. Infinity lies before him; he can accomplish what he desires. We hear Marlowe's contemporary, Tommaso Campanella (1568-1639) declare:

We see that man does not abide by the nature of the elements, the Earth and the Sun, but aims and yearns beyond them, and brings about effects higher than any in nature. Thus, when man thinks, he thinks far and away above the Sun, and yet further, and beyond heaven; he thinks many worlds, aye an infinity of them. . . .⁵

If the reader has detected some correspondences between these sentiments of Campanella and those of Tamburlaine in Marlowe's play, he is quite justified, for [Marlowe's characterization of the conqueror has very important connections with the doctrine of the dignity of man.] To understand these connections it is necessary to see what happened to the

³I use the translation of Elizabeth Livermore Forbes included in The Renaissance Philosophy of Man. Edited by Ernst Cassirer, Paul Oskar Kristeller, and John Herman Randall, Jr. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948, pp. 223-254), pp. 224-225.

⁴The idea of man's having power of his own, independent of God, was a corollary to the idea of his dignity. In Cusanus, we find the statement that "since intermediate nature epitomizes all nature . . . it is certain that all natural things, nay the entire universe, will be recreated in it and with it achieve the supreme degree of element." De Docta Ignorantia. Quoted by O'Brien, p. 75.

⁵Quoted by Giorgio de Santillana, The Age of Adventure (New York: The New American Library, 1956), p. 22.

philosophical doctrine when it was applied to other disciplines, to history and politics. The traditional Christian theory of historiography was that it was the historian's duty to record events and show how those events are the result of God's overall scheme for man. Under a number of influences, the Italian humanist historians followed a new theory. They desired from their writings to achieve a fame comparable to the great classical historians. The problem was to find contemporary events as grandiose as those which formed the subject matter of the ancient historians. One subject which seemed to fit the requirement was the career of Tamburlaine. This subject, in fact, became such a favorite that it gave rise to an independent genre, the vita Tamerlanis.⁶ The Tamburlaine legend thus evolved is ultimately the source for Marlowe's play. Through their desire to make their subject as grandiose as any in antiquity and under the influence of the rising disposition to emphasize the achievements of man without reference to supernatural causes, they chose the events of Tamburlaine's career and shaped them in such fashion as to enhance the magnitude of his conquests.

Italian writers on politics were closely connected with the historians, were under similar influences, and contemporary political conditions particularly influenced their attitude towards Tamburlaine. To them the career of the Scythian, who seemed to arise from nowhere, destroyed for a while the power of the Turks, and then retired as quickly

⁶Eric Voegelin gives a very full discussion of the background and development of the vita Tamerlanis in his "Das Timurbild der Humanisten," Zeitschrift für Öffentliches Recht, XVII, No. 5.

as he had appeared, was an example of power in the raw--the type of power needed by the leader who could consolidate all of Italy and put an end to the petty inter-State conflicts which were such a drain upon the strength of the entire country. To the school of Italian politics which culminated in the writings of Machiavelli, Tamburlaine was an example of that ideal wielder of power who was the only salvation of Italy.⁷

Marlowe is not unsympathetic toward the doctrine of the dignity of man. What he is mainly concerned with is the turn it has taken and what will be the ultimate consequences. In its different manifestations that concern shapes the characteristic Marlovian theme. It was part of Marlowe's genius to be one of the first to see what has become increasingly clear to us in recent years:

The profound metaphysical paradox at the core of Christianity, which made of it a stumbling block to the wise, has been removed; but with it has gone the spiritual experience and the life of the soul. At the end of the road there is only the inconclusive deism of Newtonian science.⁸

In Tamburlaine, Part I, Marlowe exhibits the tragedy to man which this powerful doctrine contains in its emphasis upon the material life of man and in the grandeur attached to his wholly material achievements. Once he had shown his audience that there was something truly glorious in the doctrine of the dignity of man--that Tamburlaine contained a quality of greatness--it was not too difficult to show them

⁷See Eric Voegelin, "Machiavelli's Prince: Background and Formation," Review of Politics, XIII (1951), 142-168.

⁸Giorgio de Santillana, The Age of Adventure, p. 30.

further that this magnificent man, in possession of admirable powers, was putting them to use in activities unworthy of his own greatness. The very nature of the historical Tamburlaine's acts simplified this. All Marlowe had to do was refrain from utilizing devices which were designed to evoke admiration, and Tamburlaine's acts would appeal for themselves. This is virtually what he does in the fourth act and the opening of the fifth. Of course, he does not do away completely with the supporting devices. Such an abrupt change of tone as would result would be a breach of artistic effect and would wreck the play's unity. What he does is to pull out part of the support, enough to draw aside the curtains, as it were, to give the audience a true view of the nature of Tamburlaine's acts. It is mainly a matter of balance and his technique, in impressing upon his audience a realistic understanding of the nature of Tamburlaine's acts while still retaining for his hero enough sympathy to accomplish the effect of tragedy, is not something that admits of any precise measurement or follows a recognizable, orderly plan. It is mainly the result of the judgment and right knowledge which is the inherent part of that undefinable quality we know as creative genius. There are, however, certain devices employed which we can recognize and extract by means of a close study of the text, and it is with these devices that the remainder of the present chapter is concerned.

If the reader has happened to notice the position in the play of the lines used in Chapter II to describe Marlowe's plan for apotheosis of his hero, he has remarked that there seemed to be gaps in the play which were not touched, specifically Scenes one, three, and four of

Act IV, and except for one passage, the first scene of Act V. The omissions represent Marlowe's practice.⁹

In these scenes Marlowe is allowing Tamburlaine to stand without the help of the dramatist's manipulations of imagery and other devices,

⁹Purely from a quantitative standpoint, a table of the disposition of devices designed to make Tamburlaine admirable in the eyes of the audience based upon my previous chapter clearly shows that in the scenes just named, Marlowe is not preoccupied with acceptance of the conqueror:

	Total No. of Lines	No. of References	No. of Lines Involved
Act I	446	32	109
Scene i	188	11	39
ii	258	21	70
Act II	462	26	92
i	69	6	17
ii	75	3	8
iii	65	5	23
iv	42	2	5
v	104	5	13
vi	40	3	18
vii	67	2	8
Act III	453	26	114
i	67	5	21
ii	113	4	26
iii	273	17	67
Act IV	410	6	23
i	73	0	0
ii	126	6	23
iii	68	0	0
iv	143	0	0
Act V	535	11	49
i	63	1	10
ii	472	10	39

on his own merits except for the intangible, but no less real, influence upon the audience of the characterization already built up. This abandonment of aggrandizing devices produces one of the remarkable dramatic tensions in the play. The effect of three acts of constant glorification is still in the audience's minds at moments when Tamburlaine's stark brutality is nakedly presented. The audience's horror at the bald command to impale pleading young girls is augmented by the startling discovery of such bestialities in one it has been beguiled into regarding with admiration. Because there is no real change in the basic character of the conqueror, the audience is momentarily at a loss to explain why, suddenly, it experiences contrasting reactions to him. And the members of the audience cannot console themselves that they have not been fairly warned that Tamburlaine is such a revolting scoundrel. They are forced to judge for themselves to which reaction they should attach their allegiance, just as Marlowe has directed in the Prologue:

View but his picture in this tragic glass,
And then applaud his fortunes as you please.

Let us investigate the new technique which brings about the second reaction during the final two acts of the play.

A change of tone from what has gone before is apparent in the opening lines of Act IV, which mark the initial appearance of the Soldan of Egypt:

Awake, ye men of Memphis! hear the clang
Of Scythian trumpets; hear the basilisks,
That roaring shake Damascus' turrets down.
(IV.i.1-3)

Here is a new note sounded by an adversary of Tamburlaine. Here

is no incompetent, bumbling gibbering of a Mycetes; nor does it resemble the supercilious, overweening blusterings of a Bajazeth. The Soldan speaks in strong, controlled, rhythmic cadences, whose force is second in the play only to the best of Tamburlaine. Marlowe inserts nothing into his characterization of Zenocrate's father which will result in drawing the antagonism of the audience against him. He is a wholly-admirable, legal ruler--the first and only one among Tamburlaine's opponents in the play. Tamburlaine's position as a potential conqueror is deftly changed with telling results. Heretofore, the Scythian had been the underdog, underestimated by his opponents, and emerging victorious against great odds through his superhuman ability on the field of battle. Against the Soldan, however, the situation is reversed, and Tamburlaine now holds the commanding position, both strategically and numerically. The change is accomplished quickly and effectively by the messenger's warnings to the Soldan. He describes Tamburlaine's army as containing

Three hundred thousand men in armour clad,
Upon their prancing steeds, disdainfully
With wanton paces trampling on the ground;
Five hundred thousand footmen threatening shot,
Shaking their swords, their spears and iron bills,
Environing their standard round, that stood
As bristle-pointed as a thorny wood;
Their warlike engines and munition
Exceed the forces of their martial men.

(IV.i.22-30)

Notice the emphasis upon the power of the weapons, munitions and engines of war possessed by the Scythian's army. In earlier conflicts it was the bravery and personal prowess of Tamburlaine and his devoted friends

which was emphasized. In comparison with the 800,000 men under Tamburlaine, the Soldan, even with the King of Arabia's army, can muster only 350,000 men (IV.iii.52-54). The Soldan enhances the quality of his own courage by his unflinching determination to meet the overwhelming numbers of the invader. Further, in Capolin's answer to the Soldan's assertion of confidence in his ability to defeat Tamburlaine's greater numbers, we discover that another advantage lay with the invaders:

So might your highness, had you time to sort
Your fighting men, and raise your royal host.
But Tamburlaine by expedition
Advantage takes of your unreadiness.
(IV.i.37-40)

Clearly, there was something more basically admirable in the Tamburlaine of an earlier scene who would not steal upon an enemy cowardly, but
✓ would "give him warning and more warriers." [It is, I think, significant that at this point, following his reversing of Tamburlaine's position from underdog to oppressor, Marlowe brings into his treatment of the Scythian's career the well-known and by sixteenth-century standards unusual practice of the white, red, and black tents.] It is first described to the Soldan by the messenger:

The first day when he pitcheth down his tents,
White is their hue, and on his silver crest,
A snowy feather spangled white he bears,
To signify the mildness of his mind,
That, satiate with spoil, refuseth blood;
But when Aurora mounts the second time,
As red as scarlet is his furniture;
Then must his kindled wrath be quenched with blood,
Not sparing any that can manage arms;
But if these threats move not submission,
Black are his colours, black pavilion;
His spear, his shield, his horse, his armour, plumes,
And jetty feathers menace death and hell;

Without respect of sex, degree, or age,
 He razeth all his foes with fire and sword.
 (IV.1.50-64)

This cruel practice is then depicted visually to the audience in the remainder of the play. There are three scenes remaining in which Tamburlaine is present in the action. In Act IV, Scene ii, we are told that "tents of white [are] now pitch'd before the gates" of Damascus, and though not specifically called for in the S. D. at the head of the scene, we may, I think, suppose that Tamburlaine is wearing a silver helmet with a white feather at the top. In his next appearance, IV.iv., he is dressed "all in scarlet" according to the S. D. The final scene, V.ii., finds him "all in black and very melancholy." The action in these scenes concern Tamburlaine's using Bajazeth as a footstool (IV.ii), his cruel treatment of the Turk, feeding him with the scraps from his table (IV.iv), and his massacre of the virgins (V.ii). In other words, Marlowe takes the most spectacular and well-known events of Tamburlaine's career and presents them, in quick succession, in combination with each other during that period in the plot where he is not attempting to soften the actions of his hero.

The key scene in this different characterization of Tamburlaine is the second scene in Act Four. In the preceding scene, Marlowe has introduced a different tone into the play and placed Tamburlaine in a different position. Anticipation of the conqueror's next physical appearance is thus heightened, as is the level of attention which will be paid to his words and actions. The dramatist rises to the opportunity of this dramatic moment with one of the most spectacular scenes

in the entire play. As Scene Two opens, the Scythian and his entourage enter; Tamburlaine is dressed in white; bringing up the rear of this procession are two Moors drawing Bajazeth in a cage. Of all the historical events dealt with in the play, it is this shameful treatment of Bajazeth which had been most referred to by earlier writers, and to add to the spectacle Marlowe joins with it the story of Tamburlaine's having used Bajazeth as a footstool.

The cruel, tyrannical nature of Tamburlaine, which will be progressively impressed upon the audience is suggested by the peremptory tone of his first words, "Bring out my footstool." Bajazeth is then made to get down on his hands and knees, in order for Tamburlaine to ✓ step on his back in climbing into his chair. [Just at the climactic moment of Tamburlaine's putting his foot upon the Turk's back, Marlowe has him begin a speech of twenty-five lines which summarizes Marlowe's treatment of his hero in the course of the entire play and mirrors the main idea he wishes to impress upon his audience about Tamburlaine's career. The speech begins in lines which show Tamburlaine to advantage over Bajazeth by their contrast with the Turk's immediately preceding speech (see p. 85 above). Tamburlaine then proceeds to lines containing the final and the most extended sun image among the many in the play, when he calls himself:

the chiefest lamp of all the earth,
First rising in the east with mild aspect,
But fixed now in meridian line.

(IV.ii.36-38)

The audience has previously learned to identify Tamburlaine with the sun. Here, Marlowe compares the Scythian's career with the sun's rising.

Tamburlaine is at this moment at the height of his career, like the sun fixed in "meridian line." His glory, following the analogy of the sun's course, can go from here only in one direction--downward, like the waning of the sun as it continues its course towards the west. The action, Tamburlaine's stepping up upon Bajazeth in the throne and there coming to rest, mirrors the image. Because Marlowe has not completed the natural course of the sun in his imagery, but has, as it were, left it in suspended motion at its height, the audience is in expectation of some image which will complete the movement, or some related image which will suggest the future course of the conqueror. The dramatist makes use of this expectation by comparing Tamburlaine to Phaeton, an image the meaning of which will be immediately recognized by the audience:]

But ere I march to wealth Persia,
Or leave Damascus and th' Egyptian fields,
As was the fame of Clymene's brainsick son
That almost brent the axletree of heaven,
So shall our swords, our lances and our shot
Fill all the air with fiery meteors.
(IV.11.47-52)

One of the sixteenth century's favorite books, Ovid's Metamorphoses, Book II, is the source of the reference. The generation of theatre goers for whom Marlowe wrote learned their Ovid from, or were thoroughly familiar with, Arthur Golding's translation (1567).¹⁰ Golding, who gave a Christian allegorical meaning to Ovid's pagan tales, interprets the Phaeton fable as follows:

¹⁰Golding published a translation of the first four books of the Metamorphoses in 1565. The complete translation of 1567 went through numerous reprintings until superseded by George Sandys' translation in 1626.

In Phaetons fable vntoo syght the Poet dooth expresse
 The natures of ambition blynd, and youthfull wilfulnesse.
 The end whereof is miserie, and bringeth at the last
 Repentence when it is to late that all redresse is past.¹¹

In the case of this fable there is no twisting of Ovid's purpose in order to fit it into a Christian framework. The theme of "ambition blynd" and its consequences is clearly set forth in the Latin original. Proud Phaeton is eager to prove his divine parentage to his mortal companions. In answer to his father's promise to grant him any wish he desires, Phaeton rashly asks to take Phoebus' place guiding the chariot of the horses of the sun for one day. This he thinks will prove conclusively his divine parentage. Such a feat, however, is above his nature, which is only half divine. His mortal nature denies him the ability to accomplish what is only in the power of the gods. Ovid makes explicit this theme when he makes Phoebus warn his son:

The things which thou doest desire of great importance beene:
 More than thy weaknesse well can wielde. . . .
 Thy state is mortall, weake and frayle, the thing thou doest desire
 Is such, whereto no mortall man is able to aspire.
 Yea foolish boy thou doest desire (and all for want of wit)
 A greater charge than any God coulde euer have as yet.¹²

This aspect of Phaeton's story is directly analogous with Marlowe's theme in Tamburlaine, and the significance of the reference would not, I think, be lost upon the audience. By Marlowe's time the Phaeton image had achieved the position of being the standard image for

¹¹The. xv Bookes of P. Ouidius Naso, entytuled Metamorphasis, translated oute of Latin in English meeter, by Arthur Golding Gentleman . . . (London: Willyam Seres, 1567) [Sig. aijv].

¹²I have used Golding's translation here [Sig. Cviijv].

impossible ambitions and could be depended upon for a stock response.

In the fable, Phaeton does not heed his father's warning, and as a result of his inability to guide properly the chariot disrupts the motions of the heavenly bodies, scorches the earth, and throws the entire cosmos into flaming chaos. His mad, careening flight is stopped finally by one of Jove's thunderbolts. [Marlowe insured identification of the irresponsible destruction wrought by Phaeton's wild flight with Tamburlaine's subsequent deeds of destruction in the final lines of the passage under consideration:

So shall our swords, our lances and our shot
Fill all the air with fiery meteors;
Then, when the sky shall wax as red as blood,
It shall be said I made it red myself,
To make me think of naught but blood and war.
(IV.ii.51-55)

After this passage there are no more images connecting Tamburlaine with the sun. Throughout the earlier part of the play the comparison between Tamburlaine and the sun is almost constantly present. Mary Ellen Rickey has shown how each of the references is not merely a flat equivalent, but suggests definite facets of Tamburlaine's personality.¹³ This wealth of suggestiveness which Marlowe has instilled in the sun imagery helps to emphasize the importance of this final association in the minds of the audience, thereby keeping the association between Tamburlaine's acts and the fiery course of Phaeton through the sky present during the events which follow.

¹³"Astronomical Imagery in Tamburlaine," Renaissance Papers, 1954, pp. 63-70.

Another interesting change Marlowe introduces in his characterization of Tamburlaine is in connection with the theme of the scourge of God. It will be remembered that this theme was first introduced in Act III, Scene iii, before the battle against Bajazeth. It was there used as an aggrandizing device, for Tamburlaine declared that he was God's instrument to defeat the Turk and release those Christian captives forced into slavery by the Turks. The concept is next raised in Act IV, Scene ii, at the beginning of that key speech with which we have just been dealing. Tamburlaine, stepping upon Bajazeth's back, says,

. . . let the majesty of heaven behold
Their scourge and terror tread on emperors.

This is, of course, in keeping with the idea expressed in the image as it appeared in Act III. But note what happens to the scourge theme after Marlowe has suggested to the audience a different view of Tamburlaine through the Phaeton image. The third and final appearance of the scourge theme in Part One comes in the Soldan's speech opening Act IV, Scene iii:

Methinks we march as Meleager did,
Environed with brave Argolian knights,
To chase the savage Calydonian boar,
Or Cephalus, with lusty Theban youths,
Against the wolf that angry Themis sent
To waste and spoil the sweet Aonian fields.
A monster of five hundred thousand heads,
Compact of rapine, piracy and spoil,
The scum of men, the hate and scourge of God,
Raves in Egypta, and annoyeth us.
(IV.iii.1-10)

The reference here is divested of its Christian setting. Tamburlaine is identified with two scourges, mentioned by Ovid, which were sent by the mythological gods to devastate the earth and show their

displeasure with the inhabitants. The Calydonian boar and the wolf that Themis sent are, in Ovid, not divine punishments to be stoically endured, but are reasonless, senseless beasts which must be destroyed. The great change in Marlowe's design which is evidenced here is clear if we compare these images with the only other bestial imagery which Marlowe employs in his characterization of the Scythian. I refer to the passages in Act I when Tamburlaine is associated with the fox and the lion. The effect of these earlier passages was to accentuate Tamburlaine's admirable qualities at the expense of Mycetes. But here in Act IV, the imagery serves to suggest to the audience the unfeeling, bestial aspect of the hero's nature at that point in the play when such inhumane qualities are most evidenced by his actions. The audience is again reminded of this unappetizing side of Tamburlaine towards the end of the scene when Capolin refers to the Soldan's army as being,

As frolic as the hunters in the chase
Of savage beasts amid the desert woods.
(IV.iii.56-57)

✓ Little more than ten lines later begins the banquet scene which illustrates Tamburlaine's low, malicious cruelty through the taunting of the helpless Bajazeth. This scene also contains an extension of the scourge theme. Reveling in the power he has attained, Tamburlaine no longer considers himself an instrument of God's revenge:

Zenocrate, were Egypt Jove's own land,
Yet would I with my sword make Jove to stoop.
(IV.iv.75-76)

No longer does he claim the assistance of the gods; rather, in his pride, he now considers himself an adequate opponent of Jove.]

There was in Marlowe's earlier characterization of Tamburlaine, a conscious effort to disassociate his hero's ambitions from a desire for loot and treasure. He was careful not to let such material and common motives intrude upon Tamburlaine's actions. Yet, in Act IV, he deliberately inserts evidence of Tamburlaine's preoccupation with booty. The Scythian describes Damascus to his lieutenants as a city where

The townsmen mask in silk and cloth of gold,
And every house is as a treasury;
The men, the treasure and the town is ours.
(IV.ii.108-110)

The theme is repeated in Tamburlaine's next appearance on the stage, in his first speech. A banquet has been set, the Scythian is dressed all in scarlet, and he urges his followers to "freely banquet and carouse," offering

Full bowls of wine unto the god of war,
That means to fill your helmets full of gold,
And make Damascus spoils as rich to you
As was to Jason Colchos' golden fleece.
(IV.iv.7-9)

Such lines, in the midst of the dramatic presentation of Tamburlaine's practice of displaying different colors to signify the measure of mercy he will extend to the inhabitants of a besieged city, suggest to the audience that the peremptoriness of his customs, of which he is so proud, and the murder of the virgins and all the inhabitants of Damascus, are the result of no higher cause than Tamburlaine's desire for booty.

✓ [Once he has portrayed the massacre of the virgins, which is the cruelest and most indefensible act in Tamburlaine's career, the double view of the conqueror has been assured and Marlowe can now turn to a

recovery, in part, of the magnificent hero of the earlier acts. The return is signaled in the famous apostrophe, which marks a change in Tamburlaine's character under the softening influence of Zenocrate.¹⁴ During this recovery, however, Marlowe manages to keep the audience conscious of the conflicting attitudes towards Tamburlaine which he has offered separately. For example, in two successive speeches of Bajazeth and Zabina, both are presented. The first speech is the one, quoted above, in which Bajazeth finally accepts his fate and admits the irresistible power which Tamburlaine has. The Turk implies that Tamburlaine's actions are controlled only by his own desires, that the Scythian's will "countermands" the gods. Zabina's answer contains Marlowe's own comment upon the nature of a world made up of Tamburlaines, a world in which man himself is the measure of all things:

Gape, earth, and let the fiends infernal view
A hell as hopeless and as full of fear
As are the blasted banks of Erebus,
Where shaking ghosts with ever howling groans
Hover about the ugly fury man,
To get a passage to Elysian.

(V.ii.179-184)

But Marlowe does not intend that this feeling of horror should finally dominate the audience. The major emphasis upon the magnificence of Tamburlaine in Marlowe's characterization, as overwhelmingly presented in the first three acts and in the recovery of the final scene, overshadows

¹⁴For a complete discussion of the conflict of Tamburlaine's ideals with those of Zenocrate and the outcome upon Tamburlaine's character and the play, see G. I. Duthie, "The Dramatic Structure of Marlowe's 'Tamburlaine the Great,' Parts I and II," English Studies, 1948 (London: John Murray, 1948), pp. 101-126.

such revulsion. There was, however, a possibility that because Tamburlaine does not meet with defeat at the end of the play, but is successful in all his actions, the audience might misinterpret the dramatist to mean that Tamburlaine's career is a "mirror" for an ideal way to accomplish things. [In order to forestall such a misinterpretation Marlowe makes use of the strongest literary convention of the day, the lament over the fall of princes illustrated most notably in the Mirror For Magistrates (2nd. edn., 1559) and its numerous progeny. The Mirror For Magistrates depicts the fall from great station of important personages in England's past, and illustrates a theory of tragedy, familiar to all Marlowe's auditors, which shows "how inevitable were the ends of irreligious actions."¹⁵]

✓ [There were two didactic purposes behind the writing of such tragedies. First, by showing the causes behind events, the writer could exemplify for the reader God's justice and all-embracing plan underlying the workings of the universe. Secondly, because history repeats itself, the lessons of the past can be fruitfully applied to the problems of the present; therefore, in pointing out the causes of mishap in the past, the writer can help the reader to avoid the same pitfalls. It was conventional for the writer of the separate tragedies to close his narration with a lament for the fall of the subject and to warn the readers to take warning from this example of the consequences of sin lest the

¹⁵Lily B. Campbell, Tudor Conceptions of History and Tragedy in "A Mirror For Magistrates" (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1936), p. 18.

same happen to them.】

If Tamburlaine had met defeat, Marlowe's play would have followed the familiar scheme of the mirrors, but the career of the historical Tamburlaine contained no such defeat. Marlowe manages to invoke in the audience's minds those ideas of the inevitability of God's justice which are contained in the mirror literature by having Zenocrate, the person closest to Tamburlaine, utter the [conventional lament over the fall of Bajazeth and express fear that Tamburlaine's irreligious actions will bring him to a similar end.]

It had been the habit of most critics to consider Zenocrate's lament as little more than stuffing or, at best, a bow to conventional morality. Professor Boas reflects the usual judgment when he says that "such moralizing was incidental and was in contradiction with the essential spirit of the play."¹⁶ Certainly, it does not agree with the dominant spirit of exuberance, but it is in agreement with the twofold character of the conqueror, and its tone of gloom is, to some extent, prepared for. The "mirror" theme is first injected by Bajazeth when he says

Great Tamburlaine, great in my overthrow,
Ambitious pride shall make thee fall as low,
For treading on the back of Bajazeth.
(IV.ii.75-77)

The imagery of Stygian gloom and darkness employed in the speeches of Bajazeth and Zabina further anticipates Zenocrate's lament, for the device used by the "mirrors" of calling the ghosts up to tell their own

¹⁶Boas, Christopher Marlowe, p. 76.

stories is filled with such imagery.

The tone of the lament is prepared for in Zenocrate herself by her sorrow over the massacre of Damascus, and immediately prior to the lament proper comes a statement of such sorrow:

Wretched Zenocrate, that livest to see
 Damascus' walls dy'd with Egyptian blood,
 Thy father's subjects and thy countrymen;
 Thy streets strowed with dissevered joints of men,
 And wounded bodies gasping yet for life;
 But most accursed, to see the sun-bright troop
 Of heavenly virgins and unspotted maids,
 Whose looks might make the angry god of arms
 To break his sword and mildly treat of love,
 On horsemen's lances to be hoisted up,
 And guiltlessly endure a cruel death.
 (V.ii.257-267)

When the victims are her own countrymen, Zenocrate realizes the unlawfulness and cruel, inhuman nature of Tamburlaine's deeds. Even the horses, she says, "Began to check the ground and rein themselves," when they gazed upon the beauty of the virgins. There is a profound sadness in this realization:

Ah, Tamburlaine, wert thou the cause of this,
 That term'st Zenocrate thy dearest love?
 (V.ii.273-274)

It is at this point that the bodies of Bajazeth and Zabina are found. Anippe informs her mistress that their deaths are also the result of Tamburlaine's cruelty:

Ah, madam, this their slavery hath enforc'd,
 And ruthless cruelty of Tamburlaine.
 (V.ii.283-284)

Zenocrate then utters the conventional lament over the ignominious fall of a great personage and draws the moral, pointing out that the Turk's fate is a mirror for others to learn by:

Earth, cast up fountains from thy entrails,
 And wet thy cheeks for their untimely deaths;
 Shake with their weight in sign of fear and grief.
 Blush heaven, that gave them honour at their birth,
 And let them die a death so barbarous.
 Those that are proud of fickle empery
 And place their chiefest good in earthly pomp,
 Behold the Turk and his great emperess!

✓These lines serve to make conscious to the audience the familiar world of God's inexorable justice and to recall to their minds the monotonous march of eminent men in the "mirrors," who, despite the success and great position they attain, inevitably suffer a fall at last for their misdeeds.]

Marlowe takes care that his auditors make the connection between the "mirror" convention and the ultimate end of Tamburlaine by having Zenocrate associate Bajazeth's death with her fear for Tamburlaine's future:

Ah, Tamburlaine, my love, sweet Tamburlaine,
 That fightst for sceptres and for slippery crowns,
 Behold the Turk and his great emperess!
 Thou that, in conduct of thy happy stars,
 Sleep'st every night with conquest on thy brows,
 And yet wouldst shun the wavering turns of war,
 In fear and feeling of the like distress,
 Behold the Turk and his great emperess!
 Ah, mighty Jove and holy Mahomet,
 Pardon my love! O, pardon his contempt
 Of earthly fortune and respect of pity;
 And let not conquest, ruthlessly pursued,
 Be equally against his life incensed
 In this great Turk and hapless emperess!
 (V.ii.293-306)

Thus, by conjuring up in the audience's minds the conventional attitudes of the "mirrors" and by making sure that the audience considers the Scythian in the context of such attitudes, Marlowe suggests, though every reader and auditor of the play will agree that he does so with far

less than complete persuasion, that Tamburlaine will have his fall just as inevitably as Bajazeth suffered his. And a hint of that note of pity which is connected with the fall of princes remains to the end of the play in the speeches of Zenocrate.

When Marlowe finished writing Tamburlaine, Part I, he had said what he had to say about the career of the historical Tamburlaine. He had shown what was glorious and admirable in the Tartar's career and at the same time showed how bloody and cruel was this hero. Yet the great popularity of the play made a sequel seem advisable to the young playwright. It is clear, I think, that Marlowe's original plan for dramatizing the career of the historical Tamburlaine did not include a sequel. He had exhausted his sources in the first part. Had he planned two plays from the beginning, it hardly seems possible that he would not have saved some of the material in his sources for the second play. In the Prologue to the second part he tells us specifically that the play was written as a result of the popularity of the first part:

The general welcomes Tamburlaine receiv'd,
When he arrived last upon our stage,
Hath made our poet pen his second part.

(1-3)

Tamburlaine, Part II, then, is a separate and entirely different play from its predecessor.

At the end of the first play Tamburlaine reigned triumphant over all his enemies, had declared a truce with the world, and was looking forward to the preparations for his marriage to Zenocrate. Marlowe had, however, suggested to the audience that the conqueror would eventually meet with a fall as did all proud men in high position. The obvious subject for a second play about Tamburlaine would be to trace the

Scythian's career to his inevitable fall. This is what Marlowe does in the second play; he dramatizes the events leading up to Tamburlaine's death.¹

Because there was nothing further in his sources which he could use--every significant event in the life of the historical Tamburlaine was contained in Part I--Marlowe perforce had either to invent the plot or to select from his reading incidents originally unrelated to Tamburlaine which could be manipulated into consonance with his theme. In other words, the basis for Tamburlaine, Part II is an idea, in contrast to Part I which is based upon the career of the historical Tamburlaine. This difference is the main reason for the new and experimental techniques we shall find in Part II. Of course, writers of morality plays usually began with an action in which an idea was a stronger determinant than any event or character, but so far as I know, Tamburlaine, Part II

¹In the matter of Tamburlaine's death, Marlowe makes his greatest variation from his sources. In all the histories we find Tamburlaine returning to Samarcand after his conquests and ruling it wisely and well until his natural death. When Tamburlaine, in the play, dies of a sudden illness at the height of his success, it is the only time in both plays that Marlowe contradicts the histories' account of an event in Tamburlaine's life. The reason is not hard to find. A happy and successful old age in Samarcand would not easily lend itself to that part of Marlowe's theme which was to be emphasized in Part II. There is the possibility, however, of a source yet to be discovered which contained such a variant version of Tamburlaine's death prior to Marlowe. I find that George Puttenham in his The Arts of English Poisie (1589) "Probably written in the late 'sixties and revised in the mid-eighties" describes Tamburlaine's death as occurring under circumstances somewhat similar, but obviously not indebted, to those found in Marlowe's play. Puttenham speaks of the Scythian's "strange ende, for in the midst of his greatness and prosperitie he died sodainly, & left nor child or kindred for a successour to so large an Empire, nor any memory after him more than of his great puissance and crueltie."--Elizabethan Critical Essays (2 Vols.; edited by G. Gregory Smith; London: Oxford University Press, 1937), II, 110.

is the first Elizabethan play without allegorical characters and written for the popular stage which can be shown to have such a beginning. Clearly, although it is an extension of the theme of the earlier play, Part II is of a separate and distinctly different type. Part I comments upon what was thought to be historical fact; Part II is a work of fiction; consequently, our approach in studying Marlowe's technique in the latter will be considerably different from that utilized in studying the first part. Let us examine the problems which faced the dramatist in writing a sequel.

Of prime consideration was the audience. It was the audience's continuing interest in the career of the stage Tamburlaine that caused Marlowe to write the second part. In his study of the Elizabethan audience, [Alfred Harbage estimates that thirteen per cent of the population of London attended the theatres weekly.²] Since over two-thirds of the population probably never attended the theatre,³ and since "midwinter kept little more than a third of the full springtime audience away,"⁴ we can see that Elizabethan audiences were made up of regular theatre-goers. At any rate, we can assume that the audience for which Marlowe wrote Tamburlaine, Part II was one which was familiar with the first part and that a great majority of this audience had seen the first part many times. Just as in the writing of the first part Marlowe had to be

✓ ²Alfred Harbage, Shakespeare's Audience (New York: Columbia University Press, 1941), p. 41.

³Harbage, p. 44.

⁴Harbage, pp. 46-47.

continually aware, and take account, of the audience's prior knowledge of the historical Tamburlaine, so in the writing of the second part [he had to be continuously aware of his audience's knowledge of Tamburlaine as received from his own play. Consciously or unconsciously, a knowledgeable audience could not help referring events in the sequel to what it remembered from the first part.]

The popularity of the Scythian monster as a theatrical character, if we can judge from contemporary allusions and from comparison with what passed for standard fare on the Elizabethan stage before the advent of Marlowe, was the result of his martial exploits, his ability as a conqueror par excellence, the spectacle and sensationalism of his actions, and the exhilaration of his speech. The character in the sequel clearly would have to coincide as much as possible with these elements in the first part so as not to disappoint or confuse the audience. Obviously, a Tamburlaine at peace with the world, ruling his possessions from Samarcand, would not do; Marlowe would have to portray him again as a warrior in the midst of conquest. This in itself raised another problem. [Although the audience would demand to see Tamburlaine emerge victorious in great martial actions, how could Marlowe retain their interest in such battles, the outcome of which had become dangerously monotonous even in the first part?]

[Then, too, there is the problem of preparing for Tamburlaine's eventual fall.] While showing the Scythian in another series of victories, the plot must at the same time be constructed in such a manner that Tamburlaine's death does not come as a total surprise. In addition

to these problems faced by the dramatist in writing a second play upon the same character, we must not forget that it is the first time that ✓ such an attempt was made in Elizabethan drama. [Tamburlaine is the first two-part play written for the English popular stage.]

In the main this play has received little attention from critics. Until recently,⁵ in most critical books on Marlowe the two plays on Tamburlaine were usually considered together, and the critic spent most of his space discussing the first part; Part II has usually been handled in a few concluding paragraphs which compare it unfavorably with Part I. Probably the most generally accepted critical appraisal of the second play is one paralleling Clifford Leach's remark that "A first glance at Part II suggests indeed a man labouring to fill out a play that popular demand rather than an inner impulse had led him into."⁶ Most critics have been convinced that the play is a hastily written hodge-podge of unrelated events and therefore unworthy of close study. Two examples may serve to illustrate the judgment almost universally given Part II. Miss Ellis-Fermor says that "Not only is this part episodic and filled with wholly irrelevant matter, such as the story of Olympia and Tamburlaine's speech on fortification, or with events that are only partly relevant such as the career of Calyphas, but the very theme itself is

⁵See Helen L. Gardner, "The Second Part of 'Tamburlaine the Great,'" Modern Language Review, XXXVII (1942), 18-24, and G. I. Duthie, "The Dramatic Structure of Marlowe's 'Tamburlaine the Great,' Parts I and II," English Studies 1948 (London: John Murray, 1948), pp. 101-126.

⁶"The Two-Part Play. Marlowe and the Early Shakespeare," Shakespeare Jahrbuch, Band 94 (1958), p. 91.

structurally incapable of sustaining interest."⁷ M. C. Bradbrook comes to much the same conclusions as Miss Ellis-Fermor:

The cumulative narrative could not be stretched any further, and the story of Part 2 is either a variation of Part 1 (the four kings being substituted for Bajazet) or a series of irrelevant incidents, such as those connected with Olympia. Marlowe's flagging interest is betrayed by the incorporation of passages from his current reading, in a undigested form (especially the speeches on military strategy, 3.2). The characterization is also less consistent.⁸

Like most sequels, the play is admittedly not as successful as its predecessor. Whatever the reason--too rapid composition, Marlowe's weariness with the subject, or an inherent incapacity of the theme to sustain interest for the length of two plays--Marlowe's achievement in Part II falls short of Part I. This does not mean, however, that Tamburlaine, Part II is a bad play or that it is of only minor importance in the history of English drama. On the contrary, it is a better play than multitudes that have survived, and it exerted great influence upon later Elizabethan plays; [Shakespeare's technique, for example, probably owes more to it than to Part I.]

✓ [The remaining chapters in this study will be devoted to studying Marlowe's technique in Tamburlaine, Part II for solving the problems which arose from the fact that the play was a sequel to one well-known to the audience. We will deal with the solutions in the following order: (1) building another plot of martial conquest which would hold some interest; (2) preparing, in the midst of victories, for Tambur-

⁷Christopher Marlowe, p. 45.

⁸Themes And Conventions of Elizabethan Tragedy (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1935), p. 146.

laine's sudden death at the height of his military might; and (3) turning the prior knowledge common to the people in the audience into a device for enriching their enjoyment and understanding of both plays.]

VI

Let us look at that final portion of the historical accounts of Tamburlaine which Marlowe had not used in his first play. In so doing we shall also be looking at what further knowledge about the historical Tamburlaine was readily available to the audience. Fortescue, after stating that the Scythian eventually found no more resistance in any part of Asia, describes the rich and beautiful city which Tamburlaine built upon returning home. Then he finishes his narrative with a description of the conqueror's death and the final disposition of his empire:

But in the ende this Tamburlaine, though he maintained his estate, in suche auctoritie and honour, yet as a man in the ende, he paieth, the debte due vnto nature, leauyng behinde hym two soones, not such as was the father, as afterwarde appeared by many plaine, and euident signes: for as well by their mutuall discorde, eache malicing the other, as also by their insufficiencie, with the lacke of age and experience, they were not able to keepe, and maintaine the Empire conquered by their father. For the children of Baiaceth, whom they yet helde as prisoner, aduertised of this their discorde, and dissention, came into Asia with valiaunt courage, and diligencie, by the aide by suche people as they founde willing to assiste them, recoueryng their possessions, and territories fore loste, whiche, in manner semblable did they other Princes, whiche Tamburlaine before had also subdued. So that this Empire in prosis of tyme so declined, that in our age there remaineth nowe no remembraunce at all of hym, ne of his posteritie or linage, in what respect soeuer.¹

Whetstone's account varies from that of Fortescue only in length:

¹As reprinted by Miss Ellis-Fermor in Appendix C, pp. 296-297, in her edition.

In the ende this great personage, without disgrace of fortune, after sudry great victories, by the course of nature died, & left behind his two sons, euery way far unlike their father: between wh^o enuy sowed such dissention, that through their incapacities to govern the conquests of their Father, the children of Bajazet, whom they kept prisoners, stole into Asia, & so wone the people to disobedience, as they recovered the goods & possessions that their father lost. . . .²

The main elements, then, are the facts that Tamburlaine did not meet his death as a result of wounds sustained in battle, that he had two sons who were not of their father's caliber, and that these sons lost to the children of Bajazeth the great empire Tamburlaine had built. These elements, in one form or another, are incorporated into the play. Marlowe's Tamburlaine dies of a strange illness, at his death he leaves two sons whom he expects to follow in his footsteps, and their greatest enemy is a son of Bajazeth who had formerly been Tamburlaine's prisoner.

It is the purpose of the present chapter to demonstrate that the plot of Tamburlaine, Part II was devised not as a bored response to a market opportunity but as a construction which to its own audience was well calculated to give powerful dramatic statement to an authentic tragic theme.

Marlowe bases his plot in Part II upon a series of battles between Tamburlaine and Bajazeth's son and heir Callapine. This is, of course, unhistoric, but he lets history take its natural course by allowing Callapine to escape death in the play and making clear that the Turk will lose no time in challenging Tamburlaine's sons. By choosing

²As reprinted in the Ellis-Fermor edition, Appendix C, p. 301.

✓ [to make his hero's main opponent in the second play the son of his greatest enemy in the first play, Marlowe can present to his audience a conflict infinitely more interesting than one which merely pitted Tamburlaine against some other great monarch--for example, such a character as the emperor of Zanzibar or the king of India, or another succession of monarchs--whom he had not yet had time to meet and conquer by the end of Part I. It carries with it one of the Elizabethans' favorite themes, that of revenge; it connects the action of the first part more closely with that of the second; and it sets up the interesting situation of a legal ruler attempting to regain his rightful position and possessions from the usurper who holds them--a situation exactly opposite to that which operated in Part I.] The choice of Callapine further allows for a natural comparison of the sons of Tamburlaine with the offspring of Bajazeth. Other than the hint contained in the statement that Tamburlaine's sons were not worthy of him and the fact that Bajazeth's children were at one time his prisoners, this is the extent of Marlowe's reliance upon the historical accounts of Tamburlaine for the plot of Part II. The rest of the plot is put together either by incidents originating in Marlowe's imagination or incidents in his reading originally unrelated to the career of Tamburlaine.

Although it is possible to find sources for various other incidents in Tamburlaine, Part II, none of these were vividly associated with his name as were the events Marlowe used in Part I. They were not even faintly connected with him. There has been much research done

tracking down Marlowe's sources, principally by Ethel Seaton.³ The consensus of such research would seem to indicate for Marlowe a rather wide knowledge of the available literature on the Middle East. Numerous books on Turkish history and affairs have been found to contain the seeds of individual elements in Marlowe's plays. Of these, the main sources seem to have been Antonii Bonfinii Rerum Ungaricarum decades quattuor (1543), supplemented by Callimachi Experientis de clade Varnensi (1556);⁴ the Turcicorum Chronicorum Tomi Duo . . . of Philippus Lonicerus (1578);⁵ Cantos XXVIII and XXIX of Ariosto's Orlando Furioso (1516, 1532);⁶ Belleforest's Cosmographie Universelle (1575);⁷ Paul Ive's Practice of Fortification (1589);⁸ and Abraham Ortelius' Theatrum Orbis Terrarum (1570).⁹ A recent article by Hugh G. Dick¹⁰ suggests that Marlowe could

³See entries under her name in the Bibliography. A thorough summation of all the scholarship on the sources of Part II can be found in the Introduction to the Ellis-Fermor edition, pp. 41-48.

⁴See Ethel Seaton, "Marlowe And His Authorities," Times Literary Supplement, June 16, 1921, p. 388.

⁵This is a reprint of Bonfinius and Callimachus, but has independent authority on its own. See Ethel Seaton, "Fresh Sources For Marlowe," The Review of English Studies, V (1929), 385-401.

⁶See Introduction to Ellis-Fermor edition, pp. 44-45.

⁷See Ethel Seaton, "Fresh Sources For Marlowe," pp. 395-396.

⁸See F. C. Danchin, "En marge de la seconde partie de Tamburlaine," Revue Germanique (Jan.-Fev., 1912).

⁹See Ethel Seaton, "Marlowe's Map," Essays And Studies By Members of the English Association, Vol X (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1924).

¹⁰"Tamburlaine Sources Once More," Studies in Philology, XLVI (1949), 154-166. Professor Dick argues persuasively, although from

have found much of this widely separated material in one place--a manuscript copy of Richard Knolles' The Generall Historie of the Turkes (1603), an encyclopedic work which made use of all previously published information about the Turks. But in a consideration of Marlowe's practice as a dramatic artist the distinction between the sources of Part II and the sources of Part I is of the utmost importance. We saw that in writing the first part Marlowe had to take into account that his audience was familiar with the main outlines of his source material. [His sources in the second part, however, were too specialized to be generally familiar to the audience; consequently, in writing the sequel Marlowe was neither limited by sources nor able to count on any pre-conceived notions about the plot incidents which would be manipulated to serve his ends. Events which occur in Part II have no other point of reference for the audience than their context in the play itself and the knowledge derived from a familiarity with the first part. These are facts that Marlowe well knew.]

Marlowe made the conflict between Tamburlaine and Callapine the central action in the second part just as the conflict between Tamburlaine and Bajazeth is the main martial event of Tamburlaine's career in Part I. The actual meetings take place in both plays at approximately

circumstantial evidence, that the part of the Knolles manuscript which deals with Tamburlaine, Bajazeth, and later events in Turkish history which are used in Tamburlaine, Part II was written before 1586, and that Marlowe could have gained access to the manuscript through his demonstrated acquaintance with Sir Roger Manwood, Knolles' patron and employer. Although not definitely proved, this theory is very attractive, inasmuch as all the material from Turkish history which Marlowe incorporates into Part II is found in Knolles immediately following the account of Tamburlaine.

the same point in the plot--the third act in the first play, the third act and the opening scene of Act IV in the second play. Preceding Tamburlaine's battle with Bajazeth are events depicting how a Scythian thief gained the power capable of defeating the Turk; the events preceding his first battle against Callapine depict the events which allowed the latter to advance from being Tamburlaine's prisoner to a position capable of challenging the now-famous conqueror's power. If we compare events which make up the plots of both plays we can see that the second was consciously patterned after the first. First, let us look at the martial actions which take place in each play and note their positions in the plots:

<u>1 Tamburlaine</u> (1-2316) ¹¹	<u>2 Tamburlaine</u> (2316-4646 [<u>2330</u> 7])
II.iv Tamburlaine and Cosroe versus Mycetes (following line 663)	II.iii Sigismund attacks Orcanes (following line 2921 [<u>605</u> 7])
II.vii Tamburlaine attacks Cosroe (following line 851)	III.iii Siege of Balsera (following line 3362 [<u>1046</u> 7])
III.iii Tamburlaine versus Bajazeth (following line 1286)	IV.i Tamburlaine versus Callapine (following line 3673 [<u>1357</u> 7])
V.ii Siege of Damascus (following line 1915)	V.i Siege of Babylon (following line 4174 [<u>1858</u> 7])
V.ii Tamburlaine versus Soldan and Arabia (following line 2184)	V.iii Tamburlaine versus Callapine (following line 4507 [<u>2191</u> 7])

Notice that there are five martial actions in each play. If we compare

¹¹I have, for purposes of a clear comparison, used Tucker Brooke's successive line numberings here. Brooke's numbering is contained within parentheses. Because he numbers lines in Part II consecutively from the last line in Part I, I have had to number Part II separately by subtracting the total number of lines in Part I, 2316, from Brooke's numbering. The resulting line numbers are contained within brackets.

their respective positions in each play, we shall find that in four cases battles occur in almost exactly corresponding places in the plot of each play--within seventy-five lines of each other. The only exceptions to this correspondence are Tamburlaine's attack on Cosroe (1 Tamburlaine, following line 851) and the Siege of Balsera (2 Tamburlaine, following line 3363 [*i.e.*, 1046]). [In building the plot of Part II, then, Marlowe has paralleled the martial action of Part I.] Tamburlaine's march of conquest in both plays covers pretty much the same areas but are exactly opposite in direction. His career in Part I began in Scythia, but he shortly moved southward into Persia to take advantage of the possibilities of plunder on the trade routes; after defeating Mycetes and Cosroe in Persia he turned westward to challenge the power of Bajazeth. After overcoming the Turk at Ankara--the exact location of the battle is not mentioned in the play--he immediately drove in a southwestern direction to Damascus in whose environs the first play comes to an end. [In Part II, he roughly retraces his victorious march.] We first find him marching in a northeasterly direction, from Egypt to Natolia. After defeating Callapine's forces at the border of Natolia, he turns eastward toward Babylon. The action of Part II ends in the vicinity of Babylon, but Tamburlaine's plans had called for a northward march from Babylon to his native city of Samarcand.

Marlowe carefully planned and worked out Tamburlaine's march in Part II--much more carefully than in the first play--perhaps because he was no longer following closely the exploits of the historical Tamburlaine, but rather had to invent a series of campaigns himself. In the first play he was not greatly concerned with specific geographical

locations of scenes. As Miss Seaton has admirably stated:

In Part I, Marlowe works on a large scale, without much detail; his armies move through continents and countries, and the provinces mentioned are such as were familiar to men of any education: Media, Armenia, Syria, Tartary. Not more than ten towns are named, and most of these were commonplaces to an Elizabethan: Constantinople, Argier, Damascus, Venice, Morocco. Many of the names and epithets, such as Graecia, Parthia, the Euxine, the ever-raging Caspian Lake, would be familiar to any student of the classics, and Persepolis plays the part later taken by Samarkand, Tamburlaine's own town which is not so much as named here. The setting is almost completely bounded by medieval geography. . . .¹²

In Part II, however, Marlowe is very specific about the geographic location of scenes, and at any given point in the plot the audience is well aware of where both Tamburlaine and his opponents are, no matter who is on stage. In the opening scene, Orcanes tells where he and his followers are and how he got there:

Now have we marched from fair Natolia
Two hundred leagues, and on Danubius' banks
Our warlike host in complete armour rest.
(I.i.6-8)

In the same scene Byron tells us the location of Tamburlaine's army and his plan of march:

Proud Tamburlaine, that now in Asia,
Near Guyron's head, doth set his conquering feet,
And means to fire Turkey as he goes:
(I.i.16-18).

Shortly thereafter, the direction of Tamburlaine's march is made clearer and we learn from where he began this offensive:

. . . Tamburlaine hath mustered all his men,
Marching from Cairon northward with his camp

¹²"Marlowe's Map," p. 19.

To Alexandria and the frontier towns,
 Meaning to make a conquest of our land,
 (I.i.46-49).

When Callapine persuades Almeda to betray Tamburlaine by allowing him to escape, he describes the entire route they will travel in order to get back to Turkey. In doing so he identifies his present location and the location of the escape ship:

By Cario runs to Alexandria bay
 Darotes' streams, wherein at anchor lies
 A Turkish galley of my royal fleet,
 Waiting my coming to the river side,
 Hoping by some means I shall be released;
 Which, when I come aboard, will hoist up sail,
 And soon put forth into the Terrene sea,
 Where, 'twixt the isles of Cyprus and of Crete,
 We quickly may in Turkish seas arrive.
 (I.iii.19-27)

One effect of such specific use of geographic location and extended description of plans for travel is that it more closely connects past with present actions. Marlowe does not need to portray a character traveling from one place to another. When a character enters the stage, there is no confusion; the audience knows how he arrived in that particular place and why he is there. For example, Act III, Scene 1, opens with Orcanes crowning Callapine. Despite the fact that in their last previous appearances on the stage Callapine was in the environs of Cairo and Orcanes was near Mount Orminius, it is immediately clear to the audience what has taken place in the intervening time to make the coronation scene possible. Marlowe needs to insert no exposition. There is merely the pageant-like procession on stage of the Turks bearing the sword, scepter, and crown, the mute giving of these to Callapine, and the dramatist can get on to the main business--the coming battle between

the Turks and Tamburlaine.

By the time Tamburlaine makes his first appearance on the stage we know that he is marching northward from Cairo and Alexandria towards Turkey, or Natolia. Upon entering he immediately gives his location as "fair Larissa's plains,/ Where Egypt and the Turkish Empire parts" (I. iv.5-6). It is here in the modern Gaza Strip that the Scythian is joined by Theridamas, Techelles, ' Usumcasane, and their respective armies. It is only when they arrive that Marlowe makes reference to the time intervening between the end of Part I and the beginning of Part II. He ties the action of the two plays together into one continuous career of conquest by having Tamburlaine's lieutenants describe in very specific detail the march of conquest followed by each one since leaving Tamburlaine at the Soldan's court (I.vi.50-90).

As Tamburlaine's forces move northward toward the inevitable battle against the Turks, we are always informed what point he has reached in each scene. When the Scythian's army is divided into two separate groups, Marlowe is careful to keep the advancing column of each group before the audience. Toward the end of III.ii., after the formal mourning for the death of Zenocrate is completed and Tamburlaine is ready to resume his advance on Turkey, we learn that Techelles and Theridamas have already been sent ahead:

Usumcasane, now come, let us march
Towards Techelles and Theridamas,
That we have sent before to fire the towns,
The towers and cities of these hateful Turks,
(III.ii.145-148).

When Techelles and Theridamas enter the stage at the beginning of the next scene, the audience already knows that they are somewhere between

Larissa and Natolia. The latter immediately identifies their specific location:

Thus have we marched northward from Tamburlaine,
Unto the frontier point of Soria;
And this is Balsera, their chieftest hold,
(III.iii.1-3).

After Balsera has been captured, Marlowe lets the audience know where Tamburlaine is by having Theridamas tell his soldiers that they will now march to join their leader, "Who by this time is at Natolia" (III.iv. 86). In the very first speech of the next scene, the Turks and the audience learn from a messenger the exact location of Tamburlaine's army: "Here at Aleppo, with an host of men,/ Lies Tamburlaine" (III.v.3-4). When Tamburlaine arrives on stage with his train in the middle of this scene, and when Techelles and Theridamas enter later just before the end of the scene and act, there is no question in the audience's minds how they arrived there.

Perhaps Marlowe's extreme care in making Tamburlaine's every move known to the audience is best seen in Act IV, Scene iii. The purpose of this scene is to depict Tamburlaine in his chariot drawn by the captive kings. The Turks have just been defeated, and as we are told at the end of the scene, Tamburlaine's next objective is the capture of Babylon. A reader or hearer is apt to be surprised to find Marlowe marking specifically on the map the spot where the conqueror voices the absurd speech beginning, "Holla, ye pampered jades of Asia;" yet this is exactly what he does when he has Tamburlaine refer grandiloquently to the vast distance from "Asphaltis, where I conquered you,/ To Byron here, where thus I honour you" (IV.iii.5-6)

Marlowe is concerned just as much in the movements of the Turks before they meet the forces of Tamburlaine. We are told in the opening scene that Sigismund and Orcanes meet on the banks of the Danube to conclude a truce. Act I, Scene ii, ends with the truce made and Orcanes inviting the Christians to celebrate with the Turks:

Come, banquet and carouse with us a while,
And then depart we to our territories.
(I.ii.88-89)

When this part of the plot is returned to in Act II, Scene I, Orcanes has begun his return to Natolia and already has sent most of his army ahead of him. Marlowe pinpoints the exact location of Orcanes' remaining forces when he has Frederick tell Sigismund,

Natolia hath dismissed the greatest part
Of all his army, pitched against our power
Betwixt Cuthela and Orminius' mount,
And sent them marching up to Belgasar,
Acantha, Antioch, and Caesarea,
(II.i.16-20).

After the Christians meet defeat, the location of the battle is again referred to:

Now will we march from proud Orminius' mount
To fair Natolia. . . .
(II.ii.2-3)

The inescapable conclusion arising from Marlowe's unusual attention to exact location of scenes in Part II, despite the fact that few of his auditors would be able to recognize and identify many of the places to which he alludes, is that in building his plot Marlowe very carefully plotted the action on a map.¹³ There is nothing haphazard

¹³Miss Seaton has proved beyond a doubt that Marlowe's geographical knowledge in Part II is based upon and follows without exception

about his selection of any specific location; each is consciously chosen. Ethel Seaton supposes "he was playing a great game of chess, with kings and conquerors for pieces, and for chess-board the Theatrum Orbis Terrarum: a Kriegspiel, such as many recently have played with the aid of flags on pins. . . ."14 At any rate, from Marlowe's care in locating geographically and correctly the action which takes place in Part II, we can get a hint of the characteristic bent of his mind when it is left to its own resources without someone else's story to work upon. It will become increasingly clear as we go along that, just as was found to be the case in the first play, Part II is very carefully planned. Whenever a pattern emerges in the structure of the play this unmistakable evidence of deliberate planning will be properly borne in mind.

The parallelism noted between the number and positions of martial actions in the plot of each play is only the beginning of the correspondences between the two plots. Both plays begin with a scene depicting an enemy of Tamburlaine in the midst of sovereign activities. In the first play, Mycetes finds himself aggrieved with the activities of the thief, Tamburlaine, who has been robbing the merchants traveling through Persia, and he makes preparations for ridding himself of this nuisance by sending Theridamas and one thousand horsemen to apprehend him. In the second play, we find Orcanes meeting with the Christians in order to sign a truce, the necessity of which is brought about by the

the maps of Abraham Ortelius. See her essay, "Marlowe's Map."

14"Marlowe's Map," p. 35.

Turk's need to deploy his entire force against the army of Tamburlaine which is at that moment marching from Egypt to Natolia. Both actions are the result of the threat to peace and security represented by Tamburlaine. In the second scene of Part I, we found Tamburlaine persuading Theridamas to betray his king and to join his horsemen with the band of thieves he had been sent to apprehend. Act I, Scene iii, of Part II depicts Callapine persuading his jailor, Almeda, to betray Tamburlaine and to join him in escape to Turkey.

This thematic parallelism is found in corresponding scenes in the second acts of both plays. After joining with Cosroe to defeat the Persian king Mycetes, Tamburlaine's next move in the first play was to attack his ally from the rear, although he and his followers had sworn allegiance to the new Persian monarch. In the second play, the first three scenes of Act II depict the Christians' breach of trust by attacking from the rear the weakened force of Orcanes with whom they had just signed a treaty.

Act III of each play is mainly concerned with Tamburlaine's conflicts with Bajazeth and Callapine respectively; however, in Act III, Scene iii, of Part I we find Zenocrate first admitting her love for Tamburlaine. This theme, the wooing of Zenocrate, has begun in Tamburlaine's initial appearance in Act I, Scene ii, with Tamburlaine's declaration of love for her. In Act III, Scene iv, of the second play, we find the beginning of a parallel wooing in the Theridamas-Olympia subplot.¹⁵ Olympia is taken captive by Theridamas and Techelles, and

¹⁵There are many reasons which could be adduced for Marlowe's

like Zenocrate, is an unwilling prisoner. At Tamburlaine's first meeting with the Egyptian princess, he has declared his love for her ("this is she with whom I am in love"), and made it clear that she had little choice in whether or not she would travel with him:

And now fair madam, and my noble lords,
If you will willingly remain with me,
You shall have honours as your merits be:
Or else you shall be forc'd with slavery.

(1 Tamburlaine I.ii.252-255)

The same avowal of love at first sight and statement that she has no choice but to go with him is made to Olympia by Theridamas:

Madam, I am so far in love with you,
That you must go with us: no remedy.

(2 Tamburlaine III.iv.78-79)

Zenocrate's eyes are habitually referred to by Tamburlaine as having unusual powers:

Whose eyes are brighter than the lamps of heaven,
.....
That with thy looks canst clear the darkened sky.

(1 Tamburlaine III.iii.120-123)

Theridamas supposed Olympia's eyes to have the same capabilities when he tells her that seeking her in her tent he had immediately realized she was not there "when I saw the place obscure and dark,/ Which with thy beauty thou wast wont to light" (2 Tamburlaine IV.ii.15-16).

Tamburlaine first attempted to gain Zenocrate's love by picturing to her the magnificence with which she would be surrounded:

not beginning this subplot in Act I so as to make its position in the plot correspond as closely to events in Part I as do other parallels; however, it seems to me that the main reason was probably that the same actor played both Zenocrate and Olympia. The former is dead before the latter enters the plot. Perhaps the Lord Admiral's Company had, in 1587, only one outstanding interpreter of female roles.

A hundred Tartars shall attend on thee,
 Mounted on steeds swifter than Pegasus.
 Thy garments shall be made of Median silk,
 Enchas'd with precious jewels of mine own,
 More rich and valurous than Zenocrate's.
 With milk-white harts upon an ivory sled
 Thou shalt be drawn amidst the frozen pools,
 And scale the icy mountains' lofty tops,
 Which with thy beauty will be soon resolv'd.
 My martial prizes, with five hundred men,
 Won on the fifty-headed Volga's waves,
 Shall all we offer to Zenocrate,
 And then myself to fair Zenocrate.

(1 Tamburlaine I.ii.93-105)

Theridamas attempts to gain Olympia's affection by similar promises:

Thou shalt be stately queen of fair Argier;
 And, cloth'd in costly cloth of massy gold,
 Upon the marble turrets of my court
 Sit like to Venus in her chair of state,
 Commanding all thy princely eye desires.

(2 Tamburlaine IV.ii.39-43)

The parallelism is carried even into the expressions of grief uttered by Tamburlaine and Theridamas over the deaths of their loves. Upon the death of Zenocrate the Scythian turns his wrath upon the heavens, "For amorous Jove hath snatched my love from hence,/ Meaning to make her stately queen of heaven" (2 Tamburlaine II.iv.107-108). His lieutenant, upon Olympia's death, imagines Jove's infernal counterpart, Dis, to be his rival in love:

Infernal Dis is courting of my love,
 Inventing masks and stately shows for her.

(2 Tamburlaine IV.ii.93-94)

The most sensational events in the first play were the imprisonment of Bajazeth in an iron cage and the massacre of the Virgins of Damascus, occurring in the fourth and fifth acts. Such extreme examples of Tamburlaine's cruelty figures greatly in the popularity of the play, and the audience which demanded a continuation of Tamburlaine's career

would have been disappointed if the second play had not measured up to the first in the sensationalism contained in its plot. [Marlowe, one of
 ✓ the most adept practitioners of spectacle the stage has ever known, satisfied the expectation of the audience by coming up with events, the sensational aspect of which outdid that of the first play. In Act IV of Part II he parallels the ignominious treatment of Bajazeth in the earlier play by having Tamburlaine ride in a chariot drawn by his conquered opponents.¹⁶] In Part I, the Virgins are killed offstage and we are told

¹⁶Marlowe seems to have derived the idea for this scene from the dumb show preceding Act I of *Jocasta*: "Firste, before the beginning of the first Acte, did sounde a dolefull & straunge noyse of violles, Cythren, Bandurion, and such like, during the wiche, there came in upon the Stage a king with an Imperial crown upon his head, very richely apparelled: a Scepter in his righte hande, a Mounde with a Crosse in his lefte hande, sitting in a chariote very richely furnished, drawne in by four Kinges in their Dublettes and Hosen, with Crownes also upon their heades" (Cunliffe Edition, I, 246). This source has long been recognized and accepted by most scholars; however, some writers on Marlowe, in attempting to further their own individual theories about some aspect of Marlowe's technique, have chosen to ignore its existence, and, as a result, have injected into Marlovian criticism some highly misleading ideas. John Bakeless, for example, pushing hard his theory that Marlowe's sources are confined to Mexia and the list of authorities Mexia cites at the end of his account which were available to Marlowe at Cambridge, concluded that the use of kings as chariot horses "appear in no source, and bear all the earmarks of a stage manager's inspiration"--/ The Tragical History of Christopher Marlowe (2 Vols.; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1942), I, 223. Bakeless even ignored the fact that the idea must have been in the dramatist's mind in Part I when he had Bajazeth threaten that Tamburlaine's lieutenants "shall draw the chariot of my emperess" (III.iii.80). As recent as 1952, Harry Levin, in support of his contention that the essence of Marlowe's genius is hyperbole--the love of the extreme, the attempt at the impossible--makes the following statement in connection with the scene under discussion:

✓ [The absence of actual horses from the stage, and the problem of Shakespeare and others in getting around them, throw a special light on Marlowe's ingenuity. But his audacity lay in taking a metaphor and acting it out, in turning a manner of speaking into a mode of action, in concretely realizing what had theretofore subsisted on the plane of precept and fantasy. It meant breaking through the artificial compartments that divided speech from spectacle in the tragedies of the Inns of Court, and

that their bodies were hoisted up on the walls of Damascus. In the second play, [the Governor of Babylon is actually hung in chains from the walls of the city and shot in full view of the audience.]¹⁷

It is clear that in building the plot of Part II, Marlowe consciously chose incidents which he could use to parallel the plot of the first play. The effects he was attempting to accomplish from this parallelism we shall see later.

Since the plot of Part II is basically another story of martial conquest by Tamburlaine, how does Marlowe generate audience interest? The dramatist needed to inject an element of suspense into the outcome of the campaign; that is, he must manipulate the audience's expectations in such a manner as to present [the possibility of Tamburlaine's meeting defeat.] He takes a large step towards impressing such a possibility upon them by so simple a device as informing them in the Prologue that they are about to see a play about Tamburlaine in which

[. . . death cuts off the progress of his pomp,
And murderous Fates throws all his triumphs down.]
(4-5)

making drama a much more flexible instrument for mirroring as well as echoing life"--The Overreacher, p. 48. Professor Levin's statement describes pretty well the advance toward great popular drama made by dumb show and moralities over narrative poetry, but so far as throwing light upon Marlowe's technique it is pure balderdash.]

[¹⁷We can perhaps get some idea of how sensational this scene must have appeared to the Elizabethans by the danger involved. Sir Edmund Chambers ("Date of Marlowe's Tamburlaine," Times Literary Supplement, August 28, 1930) points out that a letter of Philip Gawdy, dated November 16, 1587, describing an accident in which a member of the audience was shot and killed, refers to a performance of Tamburlaine, Part II. It would seem that live ammunition was used in this scene.]

Before the action begins, then, the audience knows that the Scythian is going to meet defeat; however, the dramatist does not say how or when. Consequently, the audience is constantly in expectation of the occurrence. Marlowe consciously works upon that expectation during the first three acts of the play, leading up to the first meeting between Tamburlaine and the Turks. Notice that the Scythian does not take part in a battle until Act IV. The battles in Part II corresponding to the victories over Mycetes and Cosroe in the first play are the defeat of the Christians by the Turks and the Siege of Balsera by Techelles and Theridamas. In other words, Tamburlaine is not given a chance to show his martial ability in Part II until more than half of the play is over.

Most of the scenes preceding his first appearance on the battlefield are designed to illustrate a falling off in his fortunes. The Sigismund-Orcanes subplot depicts an enemy of Tamburlaine in a victorious action, something never seen in Part I. While this subplot is progressing, we are shown Tamburlaine's being betrayed by one of his followers, which would have been unthinkable in the first play; then, in Tamburlaine's initial appearance, we are shown the mediocrity of the conqueror's sons and his consequent disappointment. Following the conclusion of the Orcanes-Sigismund episode is the death of Zenocrate and Tamburlaine's insensible burning of Larissa to the ground. Not once is there a scene showing Tamburlaine to advantage. On the other hand,

✓ [every scene depicting the Turks in the first three acts is designed to make them seem worthy opponents of the conqueror.]

In the opening scene, Marlowe is at pains to make the Turks a persuasively powerful adversary for Tamburlaine by forcing the audience

✓ to [identify Orcanes and his followers with the great Turkish threat hanging over Europe all during the sixteenth century.] The action takes place within the bounds of Europe, on the banks of the Danube, where the Turks meet the Christians to conclude a truce, and the audience is constantly reminded of the slaughter that had been perpetrated by the Turks upon the Christians, almost without check, for the preceding three hundred years. Byron says that they "are all glutted with the Christians' blood" (I.i.14), and advises a truce. When Uribassa mentions that it might be safer to keep what they already have conquered than to take any chances on the outcome of a battle with the large force gathered by Sigismund, Orcanes plays upon the audience's knowledge of the superiority of the Turks in battle when he states that should Sigismund bring

. . . the strength of Europe to these arms,
 Our Turkey blades shall glide through all their throats,
 And make this champion mead a bloody fen;
 Danubius' stream, that runs to Trebizon,
 Shall carry, wrapt within his scarlet waves,
 As martial presents to our friends at home,
 The slaughtered bodies of these Christians;
 The Terrene main, wherein Danubius falls,
 Shall by this battle be the bloody sea;
 The wandering sailors of proud Italy
 Shall meet those Christians fleeting with the tide,
 Beating in heaps against their argosies,
 And make fair Europe, mounted on her bull,
 Trapped with the wealth and riches of the world,
 Alight and wear a woful mourning weed.

(I.i.30-44)

When the Christians arrive onstage, the audience is further reminded of the actual Turkish threat to Europe by Orcanes' reference to a mythical siege of Vienna (I.ii.10). The ineffectualness of the Christians against the awesome war machine of the Turks and the embarrassment to which Christendom was continually subjected is implicit in Orcanes' lines in

which he reminds Sigismund of the above-mentioned siege, when

. . . thou thyself, then County Palatine,
The King of Boheme, and the Austric Duke,
Sent heralds out, which basely on their knees,
In all your names, desired a truce of me?
Forgetst thou that, to have me raise my siege,
Waggons of gold were set before my tent,
Stampd with the princely fowl that in her wings
Carries the fearful thunderbolts of Jove?
How canst thou think of this, and offer war?
(I.ii.17-25)

Thus it is that although Bajazeth, the Turkish emperor, was defeated by Tamburlaine in the first part, by playing upon the audience's knowledge and fear of the historical Ottomans, Marlowe is able to endow the Turks in Part II with enough power to threaten Tamburlaine's forces. The fact that the lesser part of Orcanes' army is able to route completely the treacherous, surprise attack of the much larger Christian army further adds to the audience's respect for the military might of the Turks in the play.

We have seen in Part I that Marlowe had used this anti-Christian theme in order to make the audience antagonistic toward Bajazeth and to induce them to look kindly upon Tamburlaine's defeat of the Turks. By calling the audience's attention to the historical Turk-Christian conflict here in Part II, Marlowe is again inviting the audience's condemnation upon the Turks. But notice what he does once he has impressed upon the audience the martial ability of the followers of Orcanes. The source of the Sigismund-Orcanes subplot is Bonfinius' account of events surrounding the battle of Varna (1444) in which Bajazeth's grandson, Amurath II, defeated Vladislaus of Poland and Hungary.¹⁸ Marlowe

¹⁸Ethel Seaton, "Marlowe And His Authorities."

✓ [follows closely the historical account of this episode of Christian treachery and, if anything, emphasizes the virtues of the Turk in contrast to the actions of the Christian leader.] Sigismund is made to swear an oath to honor the truce in terms the most personal and binding a conscientious Christian can make:

By him that made the world and sav'd my soul,
 The son of God and issue of a maid,
 Sweet Jesus Christ, I solemnly protest
 And vow to keep this peace inviolable.
 (I.iii.56-59)

Although Frederick and Baldwin's arguments for attacking Orcanes are the same as those which had been urged upon Vladislaus by the Papal Legate,¹⁹ Marlowe expands them and in Sigismund's wavering answers makes clear to the audience their irreligious nature. Frederick first reminds Sigismund of the slaughter the Christians have recently suffered at the hands of the Turks and then advises him to take advantage of the fact that Orcanes has sent the greater part of his army back to Natolia to defeat the Turk, to "discourage all the pagan troop/ That dare attempt to war against Christians" (II.i.25-26). Sigismund, referring to the oath he had taken to honor the treaty, says that such an attack "should be treachery and violence/ Against the grace of our profession" (II.i.31-32). Baldwin then argues that

with such infidels,
 In whom no faith nor true religion rests,
 We are not bound to those accomplishments
 The holy laws of Christendom enjoin;
 (II.i.33-36)

¹⁹Cardinal Julian's arguments addressed to Vladislaus, as reported by Bonfinius, can be found in a footnote on pp. 206-207 of Miss Ellis-Fermor's edition.

His point is that since the Turks, as infidels, cannot be trusted to honor their oaths, Christians need not keep oaths sworn to Turks.

Such an argument was anathema to Marlowe's audience, especially because it compares very closely with the specious logic used by the Pope in excommunicating Elizabeth in 1570, in urging her subjects that they owed her no allegiance, and that assassinating her would be committing no sin but rather performing a holy action for the glory of God. The flood of pamphlets disseminating such propaganda among the English people was at its height in the year just preceding the Armade, that is, at the time Marlowe's play was being first presented.²⁰ But Marlowe does not rely upon only the audience's intelligence to see the weakness and hypocrisy of Baldwin's argument. In Sigismund's answer to Baldwin, the dramatist points out its irreligiousness:

Though I confess the oaths they undertake
Breed little strength to our security,
Yet those infirmities that thus defame
Their faiths, their honours and their religion,
Should not give us presumption to the like.
Our faiths are sound, and must be consummate,
Religious, righteous, and inviolate.
(II.i.42-48)

If the audience is not yet convinced of the falsity of the Christians' position, Marlowe again points it out in the midst of the argument which finally convinces Sigismund. Frederick advises his leader that it is "superstition/ To stand so strictly on dispensive faith." According to him, the present opportunity the Christians have of

²⁰For example, see Cardinal William Allen's An Admonition to the Nobility (1588). Reprinted in Complaint and Reform in England, 1436-1714 (edited by William H. Dunham, Jr. and Stanley Pargellis; New York: Oxford University Press, 1938), pp. 351-381.

revengeing their previous defeats is God-given, and if they do not make use of it, God's anger will be poured down upon them,

As fell to Saul, to Balaam, and the rest,
That would not kill and curse at God's command.
(II.1.54-55)

To a Bible-reading Elizabethan public, the error in Frederick's knowledge of the Bible would have been immediately apparent. The references are to 1 Samuel, xv and Numbers, xxii-xxiv. Saul's refusal utterly to destroy the Amalekites as God commanded agrees with what Frederick is trying to urge, but the use of Balaam is completely erroneous. As every member in Marlowe's audience was aware, Balaam's position was the reverse of Saul's and Sigismund's. Balak, the King of the Moabites, desiring to drive the Israelites out of his land, sent messengers to Balaam asking his assistance: "for I wot that whom thou blessest is blessed, and he whom thou cursest is cursed" (Numbers, 22:6). But God tells Balaam, "thou shalt not curse the people: for they are blessed" (Numbers, 22:12). Balaam follows God's will and only blesses the Israelites, although Balak repeatedly offers him great material wealth if he will curse them. Thus Balaam follows God's command not to curse. Such ignorance on Frederick's part suggests to the audience the erroneous nature of his arguments in favor of attacking Orcanes.²¹ At any

²¹It is inconceivable to me that the error involved in the use of Balaam here should be anything but Marlowe's conscious devising. Miss Ellis-Fermor suggests in a footnote to the line in her edition (p. 207) that the playwright was in error through ignorance. But Marlowe was a former divinity student addressing a people familiar with one of the most charming stories in the Old Testament. Miss Ellis-Fermor seriously misunderstands a happy stroke of a technical wizard.

rate, the prolonged argument that takes place between Sigismund and his advisors over an issue the wrongness of which is clear to the audience serves to make Orcanes admirable by comparison.

Marlowe adds to the cowardice of the Christians' treacherous attack by having Uribassa tell his fellow Turks:

Methinks I see how glad the Christian king
Is made for joy of your admitted truce,
That could not but before be terrified
With unacquainted power of our host.
(II.ii.20-23)

Ironically, a messenger enters at the end of this speech and informs the Turks the Christians have broken the truce and are marching towards them. Orcanes responds to this news in lines the soaring power of which even Tamburlaine hardly attains in the play, and which point out the irreligion in the Christians' action:

Can there be such deceit in Christians,
Or treason in the flesh by heart of man,
Whose shape is figure of the highest God?
Then, if there be a Christ, as Christians say,
But in their deeds deny him for their Christ,
If he be son to everliving Jove,
And hath the power of his outstretched arm,
If he be jealous of his name and honour
As is our holy prophet Mahomet,
Take here these papers as our sacrifice
And witness of thy servant's perjury!
Open, thou shining veil of Cynthia,
And make a passage from th' imperial heaven,
That he that sits on high and never sleeps,
Nor in one place is circumscribable,
But everywhere fills every continent
With strange infusion of his sacred vigour,
May, in his endless power and purity,
Behold and venge this traitor's perjury!
(II.ii.36-54)

The theological doctrine in these lines is orthodox Christian; it contains nothing offensive to a Christian audience. The coming conflict is

subtly changed from right religion versus wrong religion to merely right versus wrong. And Orcanes, whose forces are clearly too small to withstand the full army of the Christians, places the responsibility for the outcome of the battle, the victory of right over wrong, on Christ:

Thou, Christ, that art esteem'd omnipotent,
If thou wilt prove thyself a perfect God,
Worthy the worship of all faithful hearts,
Be now reveng'd upon this traitor's soul,
And make the power I have left behind
Too little to defend our guiltless lives
Sufficient to discomfit and confound
The trustless force of those false Christians!
To arms, my lords! on Christ still let us cry:
If there be Christ, we shall have victory.

(II.ii.55-64)

That Marlowe wished to have the victory of the Turks ascribed by the audience to the direct intervention of Christ is proven, I think, by the fact that he makes Sigismund enter wounded and, in the few lines of repentance he utters before he dies, has him recognize his sin and point out God's hand in his defeat:

Discomfited is all the Christian host,
And God hath thundered vengeance from on high,
For my accursed and hateful perjury.

(II.iii.1-3)

✓ [Thus, the members of the audience are aware that God in this play has shown favor to the Turk as the more righteous man, and Marlowe has given them every incentive to lay aside their natural antipathy towards all Turks.]

Once the battle is over, the dramatist goes further. Orcanes asks Gazelles what he thinks of Sigismund's defeat,

Which we referred to justice of his Christ
And to his power, which here appears as full
As rays of Cynthia to the clearest sight?

(II.iii.28-30)

Marlowe has now maneuvered his play into an almost impossible religious implication, from which he rescues it with a neat turn. Gazellus, a true Mohammedan, cautions Orcanes not to jump to a hasty conclusion, and says that the Turkish victory is "but the fortune of the wars, my lord,/ Whose power is often prov'd a miracle" (II.iii.31-32), whereby the dramatist nullifies that part of the implications of the situation which would lead the audience logically to expect the Christian conversion of Orcanes--something he could ill afford to allow. Orcanes recognizes the cogency of Gazellus' explanation. But without accepting it fully or denying his prophet, Mahomet, Orcanes states that "Yet in my thoughts ✓ shall Christ be honoured" (II.iii.33). And so [Orcanes is characterized as a Mohammedan who though not on the road to baptism looks kindly upon Christ and honors Him in his thoughts. At this point the religious cliché of good Christian versus bad Turk has been forgotten if the audience has sympathetically followed its cues.] If any of the audience has retained the idea that Tamburlaine is a friend of Christians--an idea remembered from the third act of the first play--Marlowe has asked him to forget it. In the first act of Part II, when Tamburlaine's lieutenants describe their individual conquests, Marlowe has made plain that one of Techelles' victories was over the mythical Christian king, ✓ Prester John (I.vi.60-63). [Later in the play, he displays dramatic proof that Tamburlaine has no pity for Christians.] During the siege of Babylon one of the citizens voices a sentiment about Tamburlaine's sympathy for Christians which in spite of preceding speeches part of the audience may still retain from a still earlier impression; the poor optimistic sentimental citizen says:

Though this be held his last day's dreadful siege,
 Wherein he spareth neither man nor child,
 Yet are there Christians of Georgia here,
 Whose state he ever pitied and reliev'd,
 Will get his pardon, if your grace would send.
 (V.i.29-33)

The folly of this belief is evident when upon the fall of the city Tamburlaine orders every inhabitant of Babylon to be drowned in the lake.

There is no special respite for Georgian Christians; only the all-inclusive order: "drown them all, man, woman and child" (V.i.169).

✓[When the Turks do battle with Tamburlaine in Act IV they are facing not a defender of Christians as in the first play, but merely another infidel.]

The insertion of the theme of God's intervention in earthly affairs is part of Marlowe's plan for creating suspense in the outcome of the battle. In Part I, God's direct influence upon events was somewhat ambiguous. Tamburlaine claimed the influence of God on his side even though he was involved in actions which went contrary to what was believed to be God's law. Since he succeeded in every action, there was no basis in the play for disputing the Scythian's claim, although it went contrary to what the Elizabethans believed was right. Marlowe was careful, moreover, not to give his audience any help in escaping their dilemma; he did not allow the outcome of any event to be clearly ascribed to God's personal intervention. Yet in Part II, he makes certain that the audience is aware of God's presence. The alternative claim which Tamburlaine made in explanation of his great success in Part I was the influence of that carryover from the pagan ideology, Fortune. Tamburlaine claimed that he held the Fates bound in iron chains

and with his hand turned Fortune's wheel about. And the events in the play did nothing to dispute the truth of this statement.

The theme of Fortune is inserted early in the second play, in the very first scene when Orcanes says that he is not frightened by the Christians, only by

great Tamburlaine;
Nor he, but Fortune that hath made him great.
(I.1:59-60)

In the scenes that follow, Fortune seems to have deserted the conqueror, for most of them are concerned with depicting some personal loss of his. The climax of these setbacks is the death of Zenocrate which occurs in Act II, Scene iv. Tamburlaine's anguish over the prospect of her death and his inability to save her, "In whose sweet being I repose my life," dramatically convinces the audience that he no longer has the power to turn Fortune's wheel about. In placing the scene of Zenocrate's death immediately following the Turks' victory over the Christians, Marlowe accomplishes two things. First, the decline in Tamburlaine's fortunes close upon the heels of a rise in the Turks' fortunes obviously adds to the possibility that the Turks may actually defeat the Scythian. Secondly, the dramatic proof of God's intervention in mundane affairs to assist the Turks suggests that here too in Zenocrate's death God is directly responsible for what takes place. This suggestion is not contradicted by the imagery employed in the conqueror's beautiful threnody over his wife's sickbed when he imagines the reception being prepared in heaven "To entertain divine Zenocrate:"

The cherubins and holy seraphins,
That sing and play before the King of Kings,

Use all their voices and their instruments
 To entertain divine Zenocrate:
 And in this sweet and curious harmony,
 The god that tunes this music to our souls
 Holds out his hand in highest majesty
 To entertain divine Zenocrate.

(II.iv.26-33)

Oddly enough, Tamburlaine is here describing a distinctly Christian heaven, one recognized by the audience as the one familiar to them. At the risk of being inconsistent in his characterization, Marlowe is at pains to keep the members of the audience from losing the feeling that events which they are watching are occurring under the watchful eye of God. Also notice the final four lines, which are concerned with musical imagery. The most common metaphor used by English writers in the late sixteenth century to describe the traditional all-embracing theocentric plan operating in the universe--the cosmology so familiar and comforting to Christians--was the harmony of music. In these lines Marlowe is suggesting that, unlike the first play in which events took place apparently contradictory to the accepted view of things, this play is one in which traditional ideas operate, that is, right is rewarded and wrong is punished according to God's law. After all, had not Christ just seen to it that right triumphed even though it meant victory for the Turks? Marlowe is at pains to impress upon the audience that God's order is operative. Zenocrate's answer to Tamburlaine's question of how she fares is designed to add to this impression:

I fare, my lord, as other empresses,
 That, when this frail and transitory flesh
 Hath sucked the measure of that vital air
 That feeds the body with his dated health,
 Wanes with enforced and necessary change.

(II.iv.42-46)

The theme contained in these lines is the traditional Christian view towards this mutable mortal life and is conventional in sixteenth-century literature--secular as well as devotional. It is an acceptable attitude toward life for the Elizabethans in contrast to the attitude for which Tamburlaine stands. The end of this scene finds Tamburlaine at his lowest point thus far in the play:

This cursed town will I consume with fire,
Because this place bereft me of my love;
The houses, burnt, will look as if they mourn'd;
And here will I set up her stature
And march about it with my mourning camp,
Drooping and pining for Zenocrate.

(II.iv.137-142)

✓ [In contrast to this depiction of a low point in Tamburlaine's fortunes, the next scene shows the Turks at their highest. Notice the difference between the image contained in the lines just quoted (wherein the Scythian's mourning camp marches, drooping and pining, around the statue of Zenocrate) and the stage direction at the head of Act III:

Enter the KINGS OF THEBIZOND and SORIA, one bringing a sword and another a sceptre; next, NATOLIA, and JERUSALEM with the imperial crown; after, CALLAPINE: and, after him, other LORDS and ALMEDA. ORCANES and JERUSALEM crown him, and the other give him the sceptre.

The effect of this difference is obvious: the contrast between the descending cadence of the image and the joyous united upbeat of the new scene beguiles the audience into attributing to the Turks an even better chance of defeating Tamburlaine. Notice that Marlowe has made this coronation scene as solemn and impressive as possible in short time by having it enacted in silence. One of his purposes in this scene is to emphasize to the audience that the Turks, in contrast to Tamburlaine, are on the side of legal and moral right.] As we have seen, in the two

scenes immediately preceding this one he has persuaded the audience that God is taking a direct hand in events, and since God is always on the side of the right the dramatist suggests that the Turks will enjoy His support in the coming battle. Orcanes' speech, opening the scene, sets the tone:

Callapinus Cyricelibes, otherwise Cybelius, son and successive heir to the late mighty emperor Bajazeth, by the aid of God and his friend Mahomet, Emperor of Natolia, Jerusalem, Trebizon, Soria, Amasia, Thracia, Illyria, Carmonia, and all the hundred and thirty kingdoms late contributory to his mighty father,--long live Callapinus, Emperor of Turkey!

(III.1.1-7)

Callapine's legal right to the Turkish throne is here emphasized, and Orcanes' use of the Latin forms of his names and titles, his use of a highly stylized prose and the familiar phrases always connected with a monarch's title in official declamations, provide an incantatory rhythm which adds to the illusion of an actual and legal coronation.

After promising to reward his followers with "all the benefits my empire yields"--that is, to fulfill the function of the good king--Callapine refers to the unlawful treatment suffered by his father at the hands of the Scythian, and then refers to Tamburlaine as "this thief of Scythia,/ This proud usurping king of Persia," thereby reminding the audience of the fact that all of the conqueror's actions are illegal. This is the first time in Part II that Tamburlaine is described in such terms. Marlowe waited until such a reminder of his hero's previous career would be most meaningful to the audience. Callapine then makes reference to the fickleness of Fortune who, as the audience already knows, is no longer in Tamburlaine's power:

since the heir of mighty Bajazeth

.....
 Revives the spirits of true Turkish hearts,
 In grievous memory of his father's shame,
 We shall not need to nourish any doubt,
 But that proud Fortune, who hath followed long
 The martial sword of mighty Tamburlaine,
 Will now retain her old inconstancy,
 And raise our honours to as high a pitch,
 In this our strong and fortunate encounter;
 (III.i.23-32).

Callapine then cites his own escape as a sign that Fortune has turned away from Tamburlaine, attributes it to the influence of heaven, and states his belief that God, pitying the wrongs they have endured at the hands of the Scythian, will aid the Turks in the coming battle, a belief that the audience already has been induced by the dramatist to accept:

For so hath heaven provided my escape
 From all the cruelty my soul sustained,
 By this my friendly keeper's happy means,
 That Jove, surcharg'd with pity of our wrongs,
 Will pour it down in showers on our heads,
 Scourging the pride of cursed Tamburlaine.
 (III.i.33-38)

At this point, Callapine's contributory kings one after another number the forces they have brought for the defense of Natolia, and in each speech Marlowe manages to add a device designed either to gain sympathy for the Turks or to remind the audience of something which occurred earlier in the play and whose effect was to show Tamburlaine in a bad light. Significantly, the first contributory king to describe his army is Orcanes who, hard upon Callapine's statement that God will aid the Turks, reminds the audience of the event in the play which represented the intervention of God in the Turks' behalf:

I have a hundred thousand men in arms;
 Some that, in conquest of the perjur'd Christian,

Being a handful to a mighty host,
 Think them in number yet sufficient
 To drink the River Nile or Euphrates,
 And for their power ynow to win the world.
 (III.i.39-44)

Jerusalem then says that he brings as many soldiers as Orcanes. Here Marlowe uses an image designed, especially because of its sunny contrast with the extensive imagery of darkness and Stygian gloom in Tamburlaine's speeches in Act II, to instill in the audience a sympathetic expectation of a Turkish victory when he makes Jerusalem say that his army with their ensigns spread,

Look like the parti-coloured clouds of heaven
 That show fair weather to the neighbour morn.
 (III.i.48-49)

Trebizond reminds the audience of the Scythian's atrocious habit of burning the towns he conquers. When he describes his soldiers' courages as "kindled with the flames/ The cursed Scythian sets on all our towns" (III.i.55-56), he recalls for example the pointless burning of Larissa, an expression of Tamburlaine's rage over Zenocrate's death.

Once the numbering is completed, Orcanes caps it with a description of their plan of battle:

Our battle, then, in martial manner pitched,
 According to our ancient use, shall bear
 The figure of the semicircled moon,
 Whose horns shall sprinkle through the tainted air
 The poisoned brains of this proud Scythian.
 (III.i.64-68)

The reference to the half-moon battle formation of the Turks, the very mention of which, some writer on Anglo-Turkish affairs has said, was enough to strike fear in the hearts of Europeans, is designed to reiterate one of the themes of the first scene in the play, that these

Turks on the stage are to be associated with the historical Ottomans, who for centuries had the finest army in the world. [In the final lines Orcanes is reminding the audience of Tamburlaine's madness which began in Act II, Scene iv.]

The first scene of Act III is a marvelously designed terminal scene which brings together neatly all the themes utilized by the dramatist in the first two acts to show a rise in the fortunes of the Turk and a corresponding fall in Tamburlaine's fortunes. By the end of this scene not only has Marlowe achieved audience sympathy for the Turks, but he has made them feel that the Turks are capable of handing the conqueror his defeat and, further, that it is more than possible that they will.

Thus we have seen that in building his plot for Tamburlaine, Part II, Marlowe consciously paralleled the plot of Part I and thematically joined together incidents from various sources unrelated to the historical Tamburlaine. He gained the audience's interest in the main conflict of this second play by inviting them to acknowledge that the Turks were worthy opponents for an unlawful conqueror now operating in a universe in which right would eventually win over wrong, and by assuring them that the peerless warrior of the first play would somehow receive his deserts during the second. That is an accomplishment hardly deserving the dismissal Marlowe has often received from his critics. In writing Tamburlaine, Part II Marlowe was not descending to hack work.

VII

✓

It is highly ironic that one of Marlowe's main problems in writing Tamburlaine, Part II was wholly of his own making. He is, in Part II, at great pains to dissuade his audience of an opinion for which he himself was responsible. During most of the play, he is attempting to revive that reaction to the historical Tamburlaine which prevailed in England before the writing of the first play.

Because of the great popularity the character Tamburlaine enjoyed, Marlowe knew that in preparing for the hero's death in Part II, if he was to give dramatic statement to the proposition that his play actually supports, he would have to manipulate audience reaction in such a way as to make the conqueror's fall expected and desired. Obviously, the dramatist could not hope to accomplish this by repeating the characterization which evoked the admiration of the audience. We have seen, however, that Marlowe had attempted to show the audience in Part I that, although admirable in some respects, a Tamburlaine was a frightful spectacle, whose actions were not to be condoned and imitated. This part of the characterization was mainly restricted to Act IV of the first play. We may assume that the audience had been impressed to a greater extent by that part of Marlowe's plan designed to exhibit the Scythian's magnificence, which was by far the more emphasized part.

✓ [In Part II, Marlowe reversed his practice and emphasized the ugly and illegal side of his hero.] Up to the final scene of the second play, almost every event is designed to develop the character of

7.50
Summary

Tamburlaine in a fashion closely patterned upon that momentary glimpse of the true nature of the conqueror which is given in Act IV of Part I. Only at the very end do we find Marlowe reminding the audience of that sheer magnificence with which they had been carried away in the first play.

As in Act IV of Part I, the dramatist foregoes that comprehensive plan of apotheosis which underlay most of the action of the earlier play. Indeed, some of the devices originally designed to evoke admiration for Tamburlaine are used in Part II to evoke admiration for his enemies.

In order to suggest to the audience that Tamburlaine was a being different in kind from them and therefore not subject to those laws which govern ordinary mortals, Marlowe very consciously designed each description of the Scythian in the earlier play to emphasize a preternatural quality. He was associated with Jove, Apollo, Atlas, Hercules, the titans, Aeneas, Julius Caesar. The many descriptions of his appearance and qualities were usually lengthy and heroic. In that earlier play Marlowe was careful that not one description was couched in terms which could be applied to an ordinary man and that no mortal with whom his hero was associated in the imagery was other than a superman.¹ Most of these descriptions and associations were contained in the first three acts, by the end of which the supernatural characterization was virtually assured. Let us now look at the corresponding portion of Part II

¹See above, pp. 43-49.

and observe how Tamburlaine is characterized as a mortal--a mere mortal. The contrast is impressive. We may first notice that the only being with whom he is associated, mortal or immortal, is Hector, an association which despite the traditional British predisposition in favor of the Trojans is designed to show Tamburlaine to some disadvantage inasmuch as the Turks are in the same passage associated with Hector's vanquisher Achilles:

Ye petty kings of Turkey, I am come,
As Hector did into the Grecian camp,
To overdare the pride of Graecia,
And set his warlike person to the view
Of fierce Achilles, rival of his fame.
I do you honour in the simile.

(III.v.64-69)

This is part of Marlowe's plan to persuade the audience of the possibility of the Scythian's defeat by the Turks, and the fact that the dramatist does not intend it to glorify his hero is pointed up by Tamburlaine's own realization that in the simile he is doing the Turks more honor than himself. [The absence of other associations with heroes and gods makes it abundantly clear in the light of his practice in the first play that Marlowe is here consciously making sure that none of the virtues of such beings are associated with the conqueror.]

Another fact which is immediately observed is that Tamburlaine is not talked about as often or at as great length as in the first play. There is only one extended description of him and that is by Theridamas in Act III, Scene iv, when that warrior is attempting to persuade Olympia to go with him of her own free will. The usual method of referring to Tamburlaine in Part II is by calling his name preceded by a single characterizing adjective. Except for the greetings of his

lieutenants, which will be given special consideration later, Tamburlaine is successively referred to in the first three acts of Part II as "that slave," "Proud Tamburlaine," "great Tamburlaine," "proud Tamburlaine," "cruel Tamburlaine," "he whose wrath is death," "renowned Tamburlaine," "cursed Tamburlaine," "cruel Tamburlaine," "this thief of Scythia," "This proud usurping king of Persia," "mighty Tamburlaine," "cursed Tamburlaine," "cursed Scythian," "great Tamburlaine," "this king of Persia," "shepherd's issue, base born Tamburlaine," "the villain," and "slavish Tamburlaine."² Even Zenocrate, whose descriptions of her love in Part I had such a large share in the apotheosis of Tamburlaine, calls him here merely "Sweet Tamburlaine" and refers to his "sacred person" (I.iv.9-10). Notice that [the great majority of the adjectives are those which could be applied to any general and that many of them specifically connote a mortal,] albeit a very despicable one.

Many of the actions in Part II make dramatic statements of the same proposition suggested in the imagery and descriptions, namely that Tamburlaine is, after all, another human being. Take, for example, the scenes concerning Tamburlaine and his relations with his sons. The very existence of such domestic scenes tends to mortalize the Scythian, an effect which is compounded by the fact that like all fathers he has great hopes for his sons who, he says, are "more precious in mine eyes/ Than all the wealthy kingdoms I subdued" (I.iv.18-19); but like many sons of famous fathers they are the source of great disappointment to their father:

²Cf. I.i.4,16,59; I.ii.86; I.iii.4,6,7,77; II.ii.5; III.i.15,16, 29,38,56,57,68; III.ii.144; III.v.4,65,77,144,172.

methinks their looks are amorous,
 Not martial as the sons of Tamburlaine;
 Water and air, being symbolised in one,
 Argue their want of courage and of wit;
 Their hair as white as milk and soft as down,
 Which should be like the quills of porcupines,
 As black as jet and hard as iron or steel,
 Bewrays they are too dainty for the wars;
 Their fingers made to quaver on a lute,
 Their arms to hang about a lady's neck,
 Their legs to dance and caper in the air,
 Would make me think them bastards, not my sons,
 (I.iv.21-32).

Tamburlaine's desire for his sons is that when he is "old and cannot manage arms," they will step into the family trade, taking his place as "the scourge and terror of the world" (I.iv.59-60). There is in this scene a very clever bit of business by Marlowe to point up the mortal side of Tamburlaine. Upon hearing her husband voice disappointment in his sons, Zenocrate immediately attempts to allay his disappointment by relating what seems to her proof of one of the sons' promise as a future conqueror. Like most doting mothers, she relates excitedly an event which has nowhere near the implications she ascribes to it:

This lovely boy, the youngest of the three,
 Not long ago bestrid a Scythian steed,
 Trotting the ring, and tilting at a glove,
 Which when he tainted with his slender rod,
 He rein'd him straight, and made him so curvet
 As I cried out for fear he should have faln.
 (I.iv.37-42)

Tamburlaine, like any anxious father with an untalented son, shows how deep his disappointment goes by grabbing up this rather ordinary achievement and magnifying its importance out of reasonable proportions:

Well done, my boy! thou shalt have shield and lance.
 Armour of proof, horse, helm, and curtle-axe,
 And I will teach thee how to charge thy foe,
 And harmless run among the deadly pikes.
 (I.iv.43-46)

Contributing to the obviousness of Tamburlaine's mortality is his inability to save the most important person in his life, Zenocrate, when she is faced with death, his deep grief when she dies, and his own ineffectual conflict against death.

If Marlowe could induce the audience to consider Tamburlaine as another human being just like them, he could rely upon his hero's actions and statements being judged by contemporary standards of conduct and the traditional laws of right and wrong.

Perhaps the event prior to his death which suggests most directly Tamburlaine's mortal nature occurs when he cuts his arm to show his sons that there is nothing to fear from war wounds. In the first play, wherein Marlowe exhibited throughout a preference for general terms, nothing of course was ever mentioned about Tamburlaine or his lieutenants suffering any wounds in battle. His victories were always swift and decisive, with no mention of difficulties undergone, and so easy that one might wonder whether the victory over the great army of Bajazeth even occasioned the working up of a good sweat. If it were not for this indestructibility which is so much a part of the characterization of the Tamburlaine of Part I, we would surely fail, in reading Part II, to catch the effect of seeing the Scythian, now by no means immune to the ordinary dangers of men, sitting on the stage with blood streaming from his arm, declaring to his sons:

A wound is nothing, be it ne'er so deep;
 Blood is the god of war's rich livery.
 Now look I like a soldier. . . .

(III.ii.115-117)

Marlowe impresses upon the audience that the wars which take place in Part II, in contrast to those of the earlier play, are the kind which do take place in real life: with planned campaigns, instruments of war, strategy, and wounded and maimed men on both sides. This brings us to the basic characterization of the Tamburlaine of Part II.

✓ [In this sequel, Marlowe desired his audience to view Tamburlaine merely as a powerful soldier and to judge his actions as if they were the actions of a contemporary military leader.] After lecturing his sons on the rudiments of war, the Scythian states that his ambition for them is that they be good soldiers:

When this is done, then are ye soldiers,
And worthy sons of Tamburlaine the Great.
(III.ii.91-92)

Even his lieutenants think of him mainly as their military leader. After Balsera has been taken, Theridamas says to his followers, "Soldiers, now let us meet the general" (III.iv.85). One of the effects of Marlowe's care in specifically marking the geographical locations of each scene is to keep before the audience the fact that they are watching a planned military campaign.

This difference in Marlowe's characterization of the Tamburlaine of Part II is repeated in the language used by the hero. In Part I, Tamburlaine's language had contributed to that preternatural quality with which the dramatist wished to endow him. It was highly metaphorical and general. The only weapons mentioned were swords, lances, spears, and bullets. His method of war, as near as we can tell, was merely to wade in with hand arms. The nearest Tamburlaine comes in the first play to describe his tactics is when he says,

Legends of spirits fleeting in the air
 Direct our bullets and our weapons' point
 And make our strokes to wound the senseless air.³
 (III.iii.156-158)

When Tamburlaine speaks of war in Part II, however, he uses terms which are only slightly figurative, which refer to concrete implements of war, and which recognize specifically the realities of warfare as it existed in sixteenth-century Europe. And to make sure that he uses the proper terms in the proper way, Marlowe paraphrases whole passages from the most recently written treatise on military matters he could lay his hands on, a manuscript copy of Paul Ive's Practice of Fortification (1589).⁴ Tamburlaine tells his sons,

I'll have you learn to sleep upon the ground,
 March in your armour thorough watery fens,
 Sustain the scorching heat and freezing cold,
 Hunger and thirst, right adjuncts of the war;
 And, after this, to scale a castle wall,
 Besiege a fort, to undermine a town,
 And make whole cities caper in the air.
 Then next, the way to fortify your men;
 In champion grounds what figure serves you best,
 For which the cinque-angle form is meet,
 Because the corners there may fall more flat
 Whereas the fort may fittest be assailed,
 And sharpest where th' assault is desperate;
 The ditches must be deep, the counterscarps
 Narrow and steep, the walls made high and broad,
 The bulwarks and the rampiers large and strong,
 With cavalieros and thick counterforts,
 And room within to lodge six thousand men.
 It must have privy ditches, countermines,

³Air. I have used Tucker Brooke's emendation here. Miss Ellis-Fermor retains the nonsensical Q₁ reading lure.

⁴For the probability of Marlowe's having used a manuscript copy, see E. K. Chambers, "Date of Marlowe's Tamburlaine." F. C. Danchin ("En marge de la seconde partie de Tamburlaine") first pointed out Marlowe's debt to Ive.

And secret issuings to defend the ditch;
 It must have high argins and covered ways
 To keep the bulwark fronts from battery,
 And parapets to hide the musketeers,
 Casemates to place the great artillery,
 And store of ordnance, that from every flank
 May scour the outward curtains of the fort,
 Dismount the cannon of the adverse part,
 Murder the foe and save the walls from breach.
 (III.ii.55-82)

Such a realistic catalogue of the rudiments of war--the recognition of its everyday annoying adjuncts, the relating of successful martial actions to the proper use of quinque angles, counterscarps, cavalieros, and countermines, the very consideration of the necessity of defense--serve to bring the glory of victory and empire, the chasing of stars from heaven by sun-bright armor and the dimming of the eyes of those "that stand and muse at admired arms" down to earth with a thud. And the audience is further assured that Tamburlaine's victories are the result of such tactics when Techelles and Theridamas give extensive technical orders to their followers on how to proceed with the siege of Balsera (See III.iii.20-61).

Part of that stupendous effect evoked by the Tamburlaine of Part I was the result of Marlowe's emphasizing certain of his virtues--courage, friendship, absence of a base desire for wealth and plunder, and others--and by characterizing the Scythian's enemies in an unflattering way. In Part II, Marlowe deliberately sets about stripping Tamburlaine of the virtues previously ascribed to him and presenting his opponents, if not flatteringly, in no degrading way.

During most of the first play, Tamburlaine's position was that of the underdog. Usually outnumbered, he won his military victories

his own personal courage and unsurpassed fighting ability. In Part II, however, Marlowe makes clear from the beginning that the Scythian now commands an army almost infinite in number and never has to fight a battle with forces smaller than his foes. Tamburlaine's power is impressed upon the audience in the opening scene when Orcanes says that it is Tamburlaine he fears, not the Christians:

We have revolted Grecians, Albanese,
Cicilians, Jews, Arabians, Turks and Moors,
Natolians, Sorians, black Egyptians,
Illyrians, Thracians and Bithynians,
Enough to swallow forceless Sigismund,
Yet scarce enough t' encounter Tamburlaine.
He brings a world of people to the field,
From Scythia to the oriental plage
Of India, where raging Lantchidol
Beats on the regions with his boisterous blows,
That never seaman yet discovered,
All Asia is in arms with Tamburlaine;
Even from the midst of fiery Cancer's tropic
To Amazonia under Capricorn,
And thence, as far as Archipelago,
All Afric is in arms with Tamburlaine;
Therefore, viceroys, the Christians must have peace.
(I.i.61-77)

The fact that Tamburlaine's earlier enemies had been in the habit of underestimating him made his victories seem even more impressive and at the same time made his enemies seem foolish or, at best, pompous. In the second play, Tamburlaine's enemies are quite aware of his martial prowess. As Frederick tells Sigismund, the very knowledge that the Scythian is marching toward their land "strikes a terror to all Turkish hearts" (II.i.15). Even when he is building the Turks into adequate opponents for Tamburlaine, Marlowe is careful lest the audience forget that militarily Tamburlaine has the advantage. The Turks always place most of their confidence in God and Fortune. In the opening scene of

Act III, before Callapine numbered his tributary kings, he first referred the Turks' hopes for success to the fickleness of Florune and the aid of God (III.i.27-38). Just before the battle, when Tamburlaine and the Turks are finally on the stage at the same time, the confidence of the Turks is cautious, certainly not boastful. If anything, Marlowe has endowed the Turks' attitude towards Tamburlaine with the nervous confidence of a challenger towards the favored champion who is taunting him. The Turks' threats are somewhat subdued in contrast to the dire assertions by Tamburlaine. The fact that the Scythian almost jocularly faces the prospect of fighting this large army tends to add to the illusion of his overwhelming advantage. The Turks are in his eyes "a knot of kings, Sitting as if they were a-telling riddles" (III.v.58-59). When they respond to his threat to hitch them to his chariot, he does not even consider taking them seriously; he very flatly and simply tells them in prose,

Well, sirs, diet yourselves; you know I shall have
occasion shortly to journey you.

(III.v.114-115)

If the audience has not realized yet in this scene that Tamburlaine is still the more powerful soldier, it is made abundantly clear when Callapine starts to crown Almeda king of Ariadan: the former jailer hesitates to accept the crown until he has secured the Scythian's permission: "Good my lord, let me take it" (III.v.133). At this point Theridamas, Techelles, and their army arrive fresh from the winning of Balsera, adding to Tamburlaine's might. By such timing Marlowe makes it clear
✓ to the audience that the Turks are no match for the conqueror. [By waiting until just prior to the battle to tell the audience how really

slight are the chances of the Turks, Marlowe accomplishes two things. First, he has preserved for the audience through the first half of the play the excitement of an impending battle; second, he rudely destroys beforehand any glory his hero might have won in his victory.]

The fact that the Turks never underestimate the power of their enemy is displayed best perhaps just after Tamburlaine has suffered some sort of distemper in that scene wherein we discover that Callapine has raised a new army. One of the latter's captains, eagerly tells his leader that their host is so large that should even God Himself and Mahomet come in person, their army would be sufficient to resist the divine power and at the same time force Tamburlaine to beg mercy on his knees (V.ii.36-41). Callapine lectures the captain about their chances of defeating Tamburlaine:

Captain, the force of Tamburlaine is great,
His fortune greater, and the victories
Where with he hath so sore dismayed the world
Are greatest to discourage all our drifts;
Yet when the pride of Cynthia is at full,
She wanes again; and so shall his, I hope.
(V.ii.42-47)

✓ [By keeping the audience aware at all times of the power and size of the Scythian's army, Marlowe manages to prevent victorious battles from imparting any personal glory to his hero.] One of the results of presenting Theridamas and Techelles as conquerors of Balsera without the help of Tamburlaine is to persuade the audience to attribute the hero's martial success, in both this and other instances, to his army rather than to his personal prowess.

Conventional doctrine taught that behind ambition and rebellion was an illegal desire for wealth. In the first play, except for one

reference in Act IV, Marlowe took pains to preserve his hero from the
 ✓ imputation.⁵ [In Part II, he takes every opportunity to ascribe Tambur-
 laine's career to the desire for loot and treasure.] Before the very
 first martial action in which the forces of Tamburlaine participate,
 Theridamas suggests the reason Balsera has been singled out:

And this is Balsera, their chiefest hold,
 Wherein is all the treasure of the land.
 (III.iii.3-4)

Techelles' rejoinder brings together in the focus of one sentence the
 desire for plunder and the new, unheroical methods of war practiced by
 the Scythians:

Then let us bring our light artillery,
 Minions, falc'nets, and sakers, to the trench,
 Filling the ditches with the walls' wide breach,
 And enter in to seize upon the gold.
 (III.iii.5-8)

Once the city falls, the audience is again reminded of this preoccupa-
 tion with loot. Theridamas tells his soldiers,

The gold, the silver, and the pearl ye got,
 Rifling this fort, divide in equal shares.
 (III.iv.88-89)

Almost the last words spoken before both the Turks and Tambur-
 laine's forces leave the stage at the end of Act III to prepare for the
 next day's battle refer again to wealth. Techelles says,

I smile to think how, when this field is fought
 And rich Natolia ours, our men shall sweat
 With carrying pearl and treasure on their backs.
 (III.v.167-169)

After the victory Marlowe makes a dramatic statement of this preoccupa-

⁵See above, pp. 57-58, 107.

tion with plunder, and presents one of its more shocking manifestations when he has Tamburlaine order the captured Turkish concubines to be brought so he can reward his soldiers: "divide them, and their jewels too" (IV.iii.72).

Just before the action moves to Babylon the now-mad conqueror, from his man-drawn chariot, reiterates his interest in the spoils of war:

Now crouch, ye kings of greatest Asia,
And tremble when ye hear this scourge will come
That whips down cities and controlleth crowns,
Adding their wealth and treasure to my store.
The Euxine sea, north to Natolia;
The Terrene, west; the Caspian, north north-east;
And on the south, Sinus Arabicus;
Shall all be loaden with the martial spoils
We will convey with us to Persia.
(IV.iii.98-106)

Desire for plunder is still in Tamburlaine's mind even after he realizes that his career is ended. When he traces over a map to see how much of the world remains to be conquered, he concludes by pointing out to his sons,

Lo, here, my sons, are all the golden mines,
Inestimable drugs and precious stones.
Worth more than Asia and the world beside;
And from th' Antarctic Pole eastward behold
As much more land, which never was descried,
Wherein are rocks of pearl that shine as bright
As all the lamps that beautify the sky!
And shall I die, and this unconquered?
(V.iii.151-158)

Notice that in Part II there are no gorgeous flights of poetic fancy extolling the virtues of some generality, as there were in Part I, to disguise the question. There is no more "ride in triumph through Persepolis," no more "perfect bliss and sole felicity" to describe the glories of conquest. Tamburlaine's thirst for sovereignty is unashamedly a

thirst for bald iambic pentameter plunder.

One of the Scythian's winning traits in the first play was his friendship with Theridamas, Techelles, and Usumcasane. Although he tries to resurrect the admirable quality at his hero's death, through most of the play Marlowe does not allow Tamburlaine to reap the benefits from this virtue. At the first entrance of the three lieutenants upon the stage, the dramatist deftly--but no less surely--implies that a change has taken place in their relation to their leader. The camaraderie is missing. Their greetings to Tamburlaine are deferential--the greetings of contributory kings to their emperor:

My lord, the great and mighty Tamburlaine,
Arch-monarch of the world. . . .
(I.v.2-3)

Magnificent and peerless Tamburlaine.
(I.vi.2)

. . . mighty Tamburlaine, our earthly god,
Whose looks make this inferior world to quake.
(I.vi.11-12)

If these titles and attributes are reminiscent of those with which Bajazeth had been addressed by his bassoes,⁶ they were meant so. The offering of their crowns to Tamburlaine to be kept or returned according to his pleasure is designed to add to the impression that a different relationship than comitatus friendship exists in the second play.

✓ [The change in the conqueror's relations with his followers is not restricted only to his lieutenants.] Marlowe also manages to suggest that the change includes all of Tamburlaine's army. In the first play,

⁶Cf. Part I, III.i.

the Scythian's army was singularly disciplined, loyal, and certain of its leader's success. In the second play a change of attitude toward the conqueror is evident in the first scene in which a follower of Tamburlaine is present on the stage. Callapine, held captive by the Scythian, opens Act I, Scene iii, with an appeal designed to elicit sympathy with his circumstances from his jailor Almeda (and from the audience):

Sweet Almeda, pity the ruthless plight
Of Callapine, the son of Bajazeth,
Born to be monarch of the western world,
Yet here detain'd by cruel Tamburlaine.
(I.iii.1-4)

And Almeda (as indeed the audience is invited to) admits that he pities him and wishes he could be released:

My lord, I pity it, and with my heart
Wish your release; he whose wrath is death,
My sovereign lord, renowned Tamburlaine,
Forbids you further liberty than this.
(I.iii.5-8)

There is in Almeda's answer the admission that holding Callapine prisoner is an unrighteous act, and the fact that a follower of the Scythian implies a criticism of his actions suggests that the confidence and absolute acceptance by his followers enjoyed by Tamburlaine in the first play has begun to disintegrate. This proposition is dramatically realized when Almeda, succumbing to the young Turk's persuasions, betrays his leader and goes with Callapine to Turkey.

✓ [While he is disassociating the Tamburlaine of Part II from the winning qualities he exhibited in the earlier play, Marlowe at the same time is attributing admirable qualities to his opponents]-a device

previously used only when he attributed excellent qualities to the Soldan. Orcanes is characterized from the opening speech of the second play as a brave, righteous, intelligent leader, loyal to his legal sovereign Callapine although that unfortunate young man is at the time Tamburlaine's prisoner. The only vice Orcanes possesses, from the viewpoint of a Christian audience, is that he is a Turk and therefore a natural villain; but, as was pointed out earlier, Marlowe has attempted to persuade the audience to lay aside this inherent religious bias toward Turks.

Callapine, like his father, is the emperor of the Turks, but unlike his father, is not made to voice anti-Christian sentiments calculated to draw wrath upon him. Nor does the son speak in proud and pompous tones as did Bajazeth. Marlowe continually reminds the audience of the Turk's legal status and makes much of his admirable loyalty to his father's memory. This last is made particularly effective by the obvious contrast with the attitude of Tamburlaine's sons, especially Calyphas, towards their father.

We may further notice in Marlowe's characterization of Callapine that the Turk keeps his word to Almeda and crowns him in gratitude for his service. One other point remains to be mentioned. In the first play Marlowe had used the unjust accusations of his enemies to magnify Tamburlaine's virtues.⁷ Part II finds the dramatist using this device to the detriment of his hero and to the advantage of Callapine. Tamburlaine in Act III, Scene ii, twice calls the Turk a coward. First,

⁷See above, pp. 59-61.

he refers to him as "that coward faint-heart runaway" (III.ii.149), and then as he leaves the stage, ostensibly Larissa, to march to Natolia, says,

Then let us see if coward Callapine
Dare levy arms against our puissance,
That we may tread upon his captive neck,
And treble all his father's slaveries.
(III.ii.155-158)

Cowardice and contemptible inaptitude do not agree with Marlowe's previous characterization of the young Turk and in the opening scene of Act III the Turks were shown at the height of their fortune and power making their plans in a judicious, realistic, and by no means panic stricken fashion for defending Turkey against Tamburlaine's impending invasion. The unjustness of Tamburlaine's accusations would have been readily perceived and resented by the audience.

The favorable reception of the enemies of Tamburlaine is further enhanced by the quality of their language. Let us look at the persuasions Callapine uses on Almeda after first outlining the plan of escape:

Then shalt thou see a hundred kings and more,
Upon their knees, all bid me welcome home.
Amongst so many crowns of burnished gold,
Choose which thou wilt, all are at thy command:
A thousand galleys; mann'd with Christian slaves,
I freely give thee, which shall cut the Straits,
And bring armadoes, from the coast of Spain,
Fraughted with gold of rich America:
The Grecian virgins shall attend on thee,
Skilful in music and in amorous lays,
As fair as was Pygmalion's ivory girl
Or lovely Io metamorphosed:
With naked negroes shall thy coach be drawn,
And, as thou rid'st in triumph through the streets,
The pavement underneath thy chariot wheels
With Turkey carpets shall be covered,
And cloth of arras hung about the walls,
Fit objects for thy princely eye to pierce;

A hundred bassoes, cloth'd in crimson silk,
 Shall ride before thee on Barbarian steeds;
 And, when thou goest, a golden canopy
 Enchas'd with precious stones, which shine as bright
 As that fair vail that covers all the world,
 When Phoebus, leaping from his hemisphere,
 Descendeth downward to th' Antipodes--
 And more than this, for all I cannot tell.
 (I.iii.28-53)

This speech very easily could have been voiced by Tamburlaine himself when persuading Theridamas to betray his sovereign and follow him. The tone, the hyperbolical assertions, the magnificent imagery are in the same vein. In the first play such language except in Act IV was restricted to the Scythian's speeches and the consequent contrast between the lush poetry of the hero and the comparatively tepid speech of his opponents presented the former to advantage. In Part II, however, not only Callapine, but Orcanes as well, speaks in powerful terms.⁸ By contrast, Tamburlaine's own persuasive power in Part II falls far short of its achievement in Part I. For example, consider the second-rate persuasions he uses in attempting to get his sons to follow his example:

And let the burning of Larissa walls
 My speech of war, and this my wound you see,
 Teach you, my boys, to bear courageous minds,
 Fit for the followers of great Tamburlaine.
 (III.ii.141-144)

It is obvious that the enchantment and its underlying inspiration has been lost.

That Marlowe was determined the language of the Turks should not suffer by comparison can be seen in the care he took in composing not

⁸Particularly Orcanes' speech declaring the perjury of the Christians and calling on Christ for justice (II.ii.36-64).

only their set pieces but also their simple expository dialogue. One example will suffice. Almeda, almost fully persuaded to fall in with Callapine, asks if they will not be detected going aboard the escape ship. The Turk answers:

Betwixt the hollow hanging of a hill,
And crooked bending of a craggy rock,
The sails wrapt up, the mast and tacklings down,
She lies so close that none can find her out.
(I.iii.57-60)

The distinctive rhythmic flavor of these lines resulting from a subtle combination of alliteration, assonance, near rime, and the almost onomatopoetic effects in the first two lines, clearly points to an unusual expenditure of labor unwarranted by the importance of their expressed idea.

Tamburlaine was, of course, cruel and ruthless in his actions during Part I, but it was only in the fourth act that Marlowe did not attempt to blur these distasteful qualities in his hero. In Part II he emphasized them. There are, to begin with, more examples of cruelty, but more importantly there is no attempt to disguise it in the dialogue; indeed, Marlowe seems to have given the Tamburlaine of Part II a fascination for cruelty. In the earlier play when the Scythian speaks of his plans for conquest, he usually merely claims that he will conquer certain territories. For example, during the banquet scene, he says

When holy Fates
Shall stablish me in strong Egyptia,
We mean to travel to th' antarctic pole,
Conquering the people underneath our feet,
And be renown'd as never emperors were.
(IV.iv.137-141)

Notice that the diction is fairly neutral; that is, Marlowe uses words

which carry little connotation of victims' suffering, certainly none which would inspire disgust. This is not Marlowe's typical poetic manner. But let us look at another example. Immediately after the victory over Bajazeth, the conqueror tells Zenocrate:

Those walled garrisons will I subdue,
And write myself great lord of Africa.
So from the East unto the furthest West
Shall Tamburlaine extend his puissant arm.
The galleys and those pilling brigandines,
That yearly sail to the Venetion gulf,
And hover in the straits for Christians' wreck,
Shall lie at anchor in the Isle Asant,
Until the Persian fleet and men-of-war,
Sailing along the oriental sea,
Have fetched about the Indian continent,
Even from Persepolis to Mexico,
And thence unto the Straits of Jubalter,
Where they shall meet and join their force in one,
Keeping in awe the Bay of Portingale,
And all the ocean by the British shore;
And by this means I'll win the world at last.

(III.iii.244-260)

Here again we find the diction, though gorgeous with geographical terms, quite neutral about the human consequences of his boast that he will conquer certain territories. The Tamburlaine of Part II, when stating plans of conquest, is much more specific. He always says something about the methods he proposes to use and always in terms picturing death, destruction, fire, pain, and the like. For example, at the burning of Larissa, Tamburlaine threatens of things to come:

Over my zeneth hang a blazing star,
That may endure till heaven be dissolv'd,
Fed with the fresh supply of earthly dregs,
Threatening a death and famine to this land!
Flying dragons, lightning, fearful thunder-claps,
Singe these fair plains, and make them seem as black
As is the island where the Furies mask.

(III.ii.6-12)

Upon defeating the Turks, he promises,

I will, with engines never exercised,
Conquer, sack and utterly consume
Your cities and your golden palaces.
(IV.i.192-194)

The effect of these statements upon the audience is clearly different from that evoked by corresponding pronouncements in the first play. Here Marlowe is bidding for an adverse reaction to the deeds of his hero. By the same token, we find in Part II no attempt to disguise Tamburlaine's ideals under such conventional terms as honor or virtue.⁹ In Part I, when the conqueror crowned his friends, he told them that their births were no blemish on their honor,

For virtue is the fount whence honour springs,
And they are worthy she investeth kings.
(IV.iv.131-132)

We saw that for Tamburlaine virtue merely meant military prowess and honor "consists in shedding blood."¹⁰ In the second play, the Scythian again has occasion to define what it takes to be a king, with this great difference:

. . . he shall wear the crown of Persia
Whose head hath deepest scars, whose breast most wounds,
Which, being wroth, sends lightning from his eyes,
And in the furrows of his frowning brows
Harbours revenge, war, death and cruelty;
For in a field, whose superficies
Is covered with a liquid purple veil,
And sprinkled with the brains of slaughtered men,
My royal chair of state shall be advanc'd;
And he that means to place himself therein,
Must armed wade up to the chin in blood.
(I.iv.74-84)

⁹See above, pp. 32-33.

¹⁰See above, p. 33.

Here the audience hears in no uncertain terms the ruthless brutality for which Tamburlaine's ideals stand, and Marlowe reminds them that these sentiments are exactly the same as those voiced by his hero in the first part under the disguise of rhetoric, when he has the Scythian preface the just quoted lines with the statement that Calyphas will not inherit one foot of his empire unless he bears "A mind courageous and invincible."

The death of Olympia's son is designed to impress the audience with Tamburlaine's cruelty. Her husband already dead, the city doomed, Olympia asks her son,

Tell me, sweet boy, art thou content to die?
The barbarous Scythians, full of cruelty,
And Moors, in whom was never pity found,
Will hew us piecemeal, put us to the wheel,
Or else invent some tortures worse than that;
Therefore die by thy loving mother's hand.
(III.iv.18-23)

The boy tells his mother to kill him, or he will kill himself, for "The Scythian shall not tyrannize on me" (III.iv.29). After killing her son, Olympia burns the body "Lest cruel Scythians should dismember him" (III.iv.37). The torture feared by this good wife and her son is admittedly hypothetical at this point, but in the very next scene Tamburlaine shows a disposition toward torturing enemies when he confronts Almeda and orders the former jailer to kill himself

or else I'll torture thee
Searing thy hateful flesh with burning irons
And drops of scalding lead, while all the joints
Be wracked and beat asunder with the wheel.
(III.v.122-125)

The inhabitants of Babylon are just as fearful of the consequences of falling into the hands of the Scythian as were the inhabi-

tants of Balsera. One of the citizens, begging the Governor to surrender the city, says that he will kill himself "Before I bide the wrath of Tamburlaine" (V.i.42). Notice that it is not the bare fact that they will die that terrifies these people; it is the frightful manner in which they expect the Scythian to treat them.

Whenever, in Part II, Tamburlaine is engaged in a particularly cruel action Marlowe devises some means of particularly impressing its repugnance upon the audience. Before the conqueror murders his own son, the dramatist has the three lieutenants and the two remaining sons individually plead upon their knees for the boy's life (IV.i.97-102). After the murder of Calyphas, Tamburlaine invites a comparison between himself and the captive Turks with whom the audience already has been taught to look upon kindly:

Now you shall feel the strength of Tamburlaine,
And, by the state of his supremacy,
Approve the difference 'twixt himself and you.
(IV.i.135-137)

Marlowe invites the audience to agree with Orcanes' answer:

Thou showest the difference 'twixt ourselves and thee,
In this thy barbarous damned tyranny.
(IV.i.138-139)

In the scene in which Tamburlaine first appears driving his chariot of conquered kings, a most ridiculous and cruel sight in itself, the [dramatist forces the audience to imagine the "pampered Jades"
* actually drawing the Scythian's chariot over a great distance by having the latter specifically name Asphaltis, where they began, and Byron, where they now rest]. The cruelty implicit in this image is compounded by Tamburlaine's loud impatience with them because their capacity of

twenty miles per day is making his progress slower than he desires. The inhumanity of this bizarre march reaches its climax when the first set of kings become "broken winded and half tir'd" and Tamburlaine says, now that their best has been done to honor him, "Take them and hang them both up presently."

The drowning of the entire population of Babylon is repulsive enough in itself, but Marlowe makes the atrocity doubly unpalatable by the nauseous image with which Techelles describes what took place. The water, he says, overflowed its banks when the bodies were thrown in,

And fishes, fed by human carcasses,
Amazed, swim up and down upon the waves,
As when they swallow assafitida,
Which makes them fleet aloft and gasp for air.

(V.i.203-207)

The emphasis upon Tamburlaine's cruelty causes Amasia's subsequent description of Tamburlaine, associating him with the action of the fish, to bid fair for the audience's agreement. Amasia calls Tamburlaine

The monster that hath drunk a sea of blood,
And yet gapes still for more to quench his thirst.

(V.ii.13-14)

* [We have seen that in the course of the second play the magnificent Tamburlaine of the first play suffers a steady decline. He is stripped of the virtues he formerly had, his cruelty and ruthlessness are emphasized, he is given vices which were not evident in the characterization of the first part, he has lost the power of persuasion which was so engaging in the earlier play, he loses to death the modifying influence of Zenocrate, his enemies are made admirable to his detriment, the absolute discipline and loyalty of his troops is put in question.]
Two further factors emphasizing the decayed character of the conqueror

remain to be discussed--his sons and his madness.

Character traits which could not be directly ascribed to Tamburlaine could be associated with him through his children. [The Elizabethan theorists held that there was an extremely close relationship between father and son--the latter's actions in life being directly dependent upon heredity, training, or both.] Miss Kelso describes the doctrine:

Experience shows that men, like animals, birds, and trees, produce their kind; from one house proceed virtuous, brave, wise men, from another the opposite. Bad education, it was admitted, and free will to choose between virtue and vice may give a worthless son to an excellent father, but to begin with, such a son inherits an inclination to virtue, the manners and high spirit of his ancestors, and their ability for the tasks that fall to gentlemen, government and leadership in war. The son of the ignoble man, on the other hand, inherits a disposition to vice, skill in low and mechanic arts, and a servile and mercenary spirit, and even if he turns to virtuous ways and performs worthy deeds, he is not actuated by the disinterested love of virtue which inspires the gentleman, but by desire for gain, perhaps even fear.¹¹

The actions of the son, then, reflect directly upon the father, and conversely the actions of the father reflect upon the son. [All Elizabethan fathers and sons were under constant scrutiny:]

If children grew up wise and good in spite of bad fathers, no one would believe them good but would constantly "throw it in their teeth" that they had a wicked father. If a good father had a bad son, then the father's own honesty could be questioned, for people would say no son would go astray "unless he were by a father led thereto." Like father, like son.¹²

¹¹The Doctrine of the English Gentleman in the Sixteenth Century, pp. 22-23.

¹²Lee Emily Pearson, Elizabethans at Home (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1957), p. 76. Mrs. Pearson is specifically following here the writer of The Court of Good Councell (1607), an anonymous version of Stefano Guazzo's La Civile Conversatione.

✓ [Thus the ignoble traits of Calyphas--his idleness, his love of dicing, his penchant for lechery--and the general mediocrity of Amyras and Celebinus reflect persuasively a weakness in Tamburlaine's character.]

✓ [Tamburlaine's madness is the crowning point of Marlowe's considerable efforts to strip the character of all that was admirable about him in the first play.]¹³ Not only do we see his virtues turned into vices but his considerable intellectual abilities and his powerful poetic expression become, throughout most of Part II, the irrational ravings of a madman. The fit comes upon him the first time he faces irrefutable proof that there is a greater power than the force of his own will. His first speech after Zenocrate's death suggests frustration and irrational desire for revenge at all costs. He commands Techelles to draw his sword,

And wound the earth, that it may cleave in twain,
And we descend into th' infernal vaults,
To hale the fatal Sisters by the hair,
And throw them in the triple moat of hell,
For taking hence my fair Zenocrate.
Casane and Theridamas, to arms!
Raise cavalieros higher than the clouds,
And with the cannon break the frame of heaven;
Batter down the shining palace of the sun,
And shiver all the starry firmament.

(II.iv.97-106)

Marlowe manages to include in this speech a dire threat to each of the three regions of the universe as known to the Elizabethans. The two

¹³Two articles by Mario Praz, "Christopher Marlowe" (English Studies, XIII [1931], pp. 209-233) and "Machiavelli and the Elizabethans" (Proceedings of the British Academy, XIV [1928], pp. 71-72), and especially Battenhouse's chapter "The Influence of Seneca" in Marlowe's Tamburlaine (pp. 193-206) point out that Marlowe patterned Tamburlaine's madness upon that of Hercules in Seneca's Hercules Furens with additional details from Seneca's Hercules Oetaeus.

regions visually familiar to the audience--the earth and the heavens--are described in terms of destruction and chaos. Unable to sustain a defeat which is suffered by every man since the beginning of time, the Scythian can only think of revenging his hurt by an insane desire to make everyone else share in his pain:

Behold me here, divine Zenocrate,
 Raving, impatient, desperate and mad,
 Breaking my steeled lance, with which I burst
 The rusty beams of Janus' temple doors,
 Letting out death and tyrannizing war,
 To march with me under this bloody flag!
 (II.iv.111-116)

Theridamas realizes his leader is losing his rationality and tries to calm him:

Ah, good my lord, be patient! she is dead,
 And all this raging cannot make her live.
 (II.iv.119-120)

But Tamburlaine cannot accept reality when it is against his wishes:

Ah, sweet Theridamas, say so no more;
 Though she be dead, yet let me think she lives,
 And feed my mind that dies for want of her.
 (II.iv.126-128)

It is after this scene that all of the Scythian's martial actions, outrageous atrocities, and irreligious threats take place. By choosing to portray his hero as a madman, Marlowe offers reasonable justification for many of the differences in characterization contained in the two plays.

Tamburlaine is continually shown during the rest of the play as a threat to the order in the universe as a result of his vindictive reaction to his wife's death. First, he burns Larissa to the ground "Because this place bereft me of my love" (II.iv.138). Then he threatens

death and famine to all the land (III.ii.9) and we hear that he has sent Techelles and Theridamas "before to fire the towns,/ The towers and cities" (III.ii.147-148) of the Turks. Once he has been stricken by a sudden distemper he threatens the stability of the entire world:

Why, shall I sit and languish in this pain?
No, strike the drums, and, in revenge of this,
Come, let us charge our spears, and pierce his breast
Whose shoulders bear the axis of the world,
That, if I perish, heaven and earth may fade.
(V.iii.56-60)

* [The extreme selfishness exhibited in the last line coincides perfectly with the level to which Tamburlaine's pride has climbed in Part II. In borrowing the device from Gascoigne and Kinwelmarsh of displaying a man-drawn chariot, Marlowe has associated Tamburlaine with one of the standard historical examples of ambitious pride. In the description of the dumbshow in Jocasta where Marlowe got his idea, we are told that the spectacle represents "to us Ambition, by the hystorie of Sesostres king of Egypt, who beeing in his time and reigne a mightie Conquerour, yet not content to have subdued many princes, and taken from them their kingdomes and dominions, did in like manner cause those Kinges whome he had so overcome, to draw in his Chariote like Beastes and Oxen, thereby to content his unbrideled ambitious desire."¹⁴ If the authors could expect such audience recognition of the dumbshow's meaning, certainly we can assume that one of Marlowe's reasons for repeating it was that it was assured of a stock response.]

In Act IV, just after defeating the Turks, the Scythian brags to

¹⁴Complete Works of George Gascoigne, I, 246.

his prisoners that he expects that Jove, "esteeming me too good for earth," will honor him by making him one of the constellations (IV.iii.60-63). By the final act Jove is no longer considered as any kind of benefactor but as a lesser monarch when Tamburlaine instructs Theridamas to

haste to the court of Jove;
Will him to send Apollo hither straight,
To cure me, or I'll fetch him down myself.
(V.iii.61-63)

Just as Tamburlaine could not accept the fact of Zenocrate's death, he cannot admit the fact that his sons will not be what he desires. When Calyphas prefers dicing in the camp to fighting, his father blames the boy's effeminate nature not upon any failure of his own but upon Jove, thus originating the antagonism against God which grows more bitter as the play moves on. As he is about to stab Calyphas, the Scythian addresses Jove and states that he has no fear of the Olympian; rather he himself contains that divine spirit,

Made of the mould whereof thyself consists,
Which makes me valiant, proud, ambitious,
Ready to levy power against thy throne,
That I might move the turning spheres of heaven;
For earth and all this airy region
Cannot contain the state of Tamburlaine
(IV.i.115-120)

These lines also carry a threat dangerous to the whole order of the universe. Marlowe does not make his exact meaning clear, but it is evident that in "That I might move the turning spheres of heaven;" Tamburlaine says either that he wants to change the motions of the spheres or that he desires to become the prime mover himself, that is, he wishes to be God. Whichever the meaning, it is obvious that only a madman could

entertain the idea.

Immediately following the murder of Calyphas, the breach between Tamburlaine and God becomes wider as the Scythian, in effect, issues a challenge to Him:

By Mahomet, thy mighty friend, I swear,
In sending to my issue such a soul,
Created of the massy dregs of earth,
The scum and tartar of the elements,
Wherein was neither courage, strength or wit,
But folly, sloth, and damned idleness,
Thou hast procur'd a greater enemy
Than he that darted mountains at thy head.
(IV.i.121-128)

* The challenge becomes unequivocal in Act V when Tamburlaine burns the copies of the Koran and dares Mahomet to stop him. [Under existing conditions of the laws governing stage utterance, it would have been impossible for Marlowe to present Tamburlaine daring God Himself out of heaven.] Anyway, the Scythian was nominally a Mohammedan and the idea that Mahomet was worshipped by his followers was generally believed among the English people. The idea was certainly given credence in literary tradition. That pagans in general worshipped Mahomet was unquestioningly assumed by the authors of the mystery cycles. More contemporarily, in Robert Greene's Alphonsus, King of Arragon, Amarack considers Mahomet a god: "thou proud iniurious God,/ Mahound I meane" (III.ii.907-908).¹⁵

Inasmuch as Tamburlaine's previous threats had been made to Jove, a conventional poetic metonym for God, it would seem probable that

¹⁵ The Plays and Poems of Robert Greene (Edited by J. Churton Collins; 2 Vols.; Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1905), I.

the audience would understand the passage under consideration as a blasphemous threat to God. Particularly would they so construe it when only seventeen lines later, just as Tamburlaine is about to depart for Persia with all his spoils to "ride in golden armour like the sun" through the streets of Samarcand, he is struck down suddenly by a strange distemper (V.i.217). The Elizabethans' explicit belief in God's active interference in mundane affairs, coupled with the fact that Marlowe has already dramatically stated that He is taking an interest in the actions presented by the play, would make them suspect, at the least, that Tamburlaine's distemper is an act of God.

Tamburlaine's madness and animosity towards God does not end with his distemper. Just as before when he received some check to his will, he refuses to admit the consequences of mortality. He ascribes his suddenly failing health to the envy of the gods and his reaction to this affront is a pitiable threat to lay siege to heaven:

What daring god torments my body thus,
 And seeks to conquer mighty Tamburlaine?
 Shall sickness prove me now to be a man,
 That have been term'd the terror of the world?
 Techelles and the rest, come, take your swords,
 And threaten him whose hand afflicts my soul:
 Come, let us march against the powers of heaven,
 And set black streamers in the firmament,
 To signify the slaughter of the gods,
 Ah, friends, what shall I do? I cannot stand.
 Come, carry me to war against the gods,
 That thus envy the health of Tamburlaine.

(V.iii.42-53)

The weakening of the Scythian's mental powers is evident in many of his speeches. Take, for example, his argument attempting to dissuade Calyphas from a fear of death:

Hast thou beheld a peal of ordnance strike
 A ring of pikes, mingled with shot and horse,
 Whose shattered limbs, being tossed as high as heaven,
 Hang in the air as thick as sunny motes,
 And canst thou, coward, stand in fear of death?
 (III.ii.98-102)

Marlowe has here introduced an image calculated to add to a fear of death in battle rather than to help the opposite persuasion. The thought of one's body being blown to bits by an unseen opponent has always been a deterrent to martial enthusiasm ever since the use of cannon was first introduced in warfare. The inappropriateness and incongruity of the image is readily felt. But the dramatist goes farther to convince his auditors of Tamburlaine's madness than just making it explicit in the Scythian's actions and thought. At a climactic point in the play--after the murder of Calyphas and Tamburlaine's subsequent challenge to Jove for sending him such a son, Marlowe has Jerusalem refer to his maddened mind:

Thy victories are grown so violent,
 That shortly heaven, filled with the meteors
 Of blood and fire thy tyrannies have made,
 Will pour down blood and fire on thy head,
 Whose scalding drops will pierce thy seething brains
 And with our bloods revenge our bloods on thee.
 (IV.i.140-145)

The choice of the adjective seething to describe the state of Tamburlaine's brains is perfect. Not only does it convey the sense of madness, but also of extreme heat and agitation which are intimately associated with the Scythian's eventual death, thereby suggesting a connection between his madness and death. This connection is made clearer as the play progresses. Jerusalem's prophecy of the manner of Tamburlaine's death--that it will result from excessive heat--roughly coin-

cides with the physician's description of the conqueror's malady:

Your veins are full of accidental heat,
Whereby the moisture of your blood is dried:
The humidum and calor, which some hold
Is not a parcel of the elements,
But of a substance more divine and pure,
Is almost clean extinguished and spent;
Which, being the cause of life, imports your death.
Besides, my lord, this day is critical,
Dangerous to those whose crisis is as yours:
Your artiers, which amongst the veins convey
The lively spirits which the heart engenders,
Are parched and void of spirit, that the soul
Wanting those organons by which it moves,
Cannot endure, by arguments of art.

(V.iii.84-97)

Later in the scene in which Jerusalem makes his prophecy, Soria comes closer to the specific physiological causes of Tamburlaine's death:

May never spirit, vein or artier feed
The cursed substance of that cruel heart;
But, wanting moisture and remorseful blood,
Dry up with anger, and consume with heat!

(IV.i.178-81)

The effect of having Tamburlaine's malady resemble so closely such predictions by his enemies is that the audience will more readily believe that his death is not accidental or natural, but that it is the result of divine punishment. However, Marlowe does not make his death occur in a dramatic vacuum. He allows for a physiological explanation which connects Tamburlaine's death with his character and the events of his life.

Although he overrates the importance of Elizabethan psychology and physiology in the play (calling it "a tragedy of inordinate passions"), Professor Parr has shown that the cause of the "accidental heat" which dries up the moisture in Tamburlaine's blood is his intemperate passions--ambition, hatred, wrath, revenge:

As a result of his intense passion . . . Tamburlaine has occasioned in his body an excess of febrile heat. This "accidental heat" parches his arteries and dries up in his blood the radical moisture (humidum) which is necessary for the preservation of his natural heat (calor). The depletion of his humidum and calor (whose admixture in the blood gives rise to the spirits) prevents his soul's functions, stops his bodily activities, and thereby causes his death. Although Tamburlaine does not realize it, the more his passion is enraged the more malignant his bodily condition becomes, and the result is of course disastrous. Blindly, therefore, because of this "tragic flaw" in his character, Tamburlaine hurls himself onward to his death.¹⁶

This explains the physician's offering the ailing conqueror a potion "Which will abate the fury of your fit,/ And cause some milder spirits govern you" (V.iii.79-80). The physiological theory involved here is also the basis for the proverb, "Nothing that is violent is permanent."¹⁷ Viewed in this light, an exchange between Techelles and Tamburlaine becomes highly significant in that it suggests to the audience that the violence of the Scythian's character is behind his malady, and this truth is confirmed in Tamburlaine's realization of what the consequences will mean to him:

Tech. Sit still, my gracious lord; this grief will cease,
And cannot last, it is so violent.

Tamb. Not last, Techelles! no, for I shall die.
(V.iii.64-66)

Thus when Soria, in the preceding act, says he wishes Tamburlaine's heart may dry up with anger, he accurately prophesies what eventually

¹⁶Johnston Parr, "Tamburlaine's Malady," PMLA, LIX (1944), p. 710.

¹⁷This proverb frequently occurs in the literature of Marlowe's time. See M. P. Tilley, Elizabethan Proverb Lore in Lyly's "Euphues" and in Pettie's "Petite Pallace" (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1926), p. 317.

does happen.

If we remember that throughout the Scythian's career in Part II, it is his cruelty and wrath which are emphasized--each vengeful action becoming more and more extreme--we can see that Marlowe has plotted the play in such a manner that each action contributes to the climax, the death of the hero, as the logical result of all that has gone before. He also ties very neatly together the beginning and end of Tamburlaine's career. Upon defending his rebellion against Cosroe in the first play, Tamburlaine stated that Nature taught man by analogy to have aspiring minds because of the warring within the body by the four elements. Contemporary physiology taught, however, that one element's gaining regimment over the other three led to destruction of the body. This, in essence, is what happens in Tamburlaine's body and causes his death.

VIII

In Chapter VI we saw that the plot of Tamburlaine, Part II is patterned after the plot of Tamburlaine, Part I to this extent: that each member in an important group of events in the later play closely parallels an event in the earlier, and the sequence of these corresponding events is identical. The total structure of Part II, however, is not merely a repetition of the structure of the earlier play; it is an original structure functionally geared to its own dramatic content but designed to take advantage of the fact that second play would be played before an audience familiar with Part I. Marlowe consciously exploits the audience's remembrance of the events in Part I by repeating those events in Part II in such a manner that the comparison of the parallel events emphasizes Tamburlaine's deterioration as an admirable character. Let us investigate a few of the parallel events in this light.

Both plays depict a follower betraying his sovereign and joining the forces of the latter's enemy. Tamburlaine's persuasion of Theridamas to join with him, bringing one thousand horsemen, had emphasized the Scythian's bravery, his strong imagination, and the Orphic quality of his speech--all admirable attributes. In the second play it is Tamburlaine who is betrayed by Almeda through the persuasions of his greatest enemy. Here it is Callapine whose admirable qualities are impressed upon the audience and reflect pejoratively upon Tamburlaine's powers of persuasion. The incident suggests to the audience that the Scythian's imagination is by no means unique, as it seemed in the first play. Of

course, the thematic parallel of these two incidents was probably enough to suggest a comparison to the audience, but Marlowe makes it explicit that he is inviting a comparison in this specific incident and by doing so issues a tacit invitation to be on the alert for parallels in what is to follow. He makes pointed reference to the earlier play. Callapine says to his jailor,

Ah, were I now but half so eloquent
To paint in words what I'll perform in deeds,
I know thou wouldst depart from hence with me!
(I.iii.9-11)

These lines hark back to Theridamas' statement to Cosroe about the "working words" Tamburlaine has, and his assertion that the Persian's speech will stay "when you see his actions top his speech" (Cf. 1 Tamburlaine, II.iii.25-27). The clearest reference comes as Callapine and Almeda are about to leave the stage and the latter speaks of a group of one thousand men, reminiscent of the same number in Theridamas' force:

Although he sent a thousand armed men
To intercept this haughty enterprise,
Yet would I venture to conduct your grace,
(I.iii.70-72).

There is a similar vocal pointer at the end of Act III to induce the audience to make a comparison between Calyphas, Tamburlaine's son, and the feeblest coward of the first play. Just before the armies of Tamburlaine and Callapine leave the stage to prepare for the battle on the succeeding day, the Scythian speaking about Almeda refers to Mycetes:

Look to him, Theridamas, when we are fighting, lest he
hide his crown as the foolish king of Persia did.
(III.v.155-157)

The purpose of this reference is to suggest to the audience the correspondence in character between the foolish and cowardly Persian king, who

was the very antithesis of Tamburlaine in the first play, and the conqueror's son Calyphas. Fifteen lines after this reference to Mycetes begins the scene in which Calyphas refuses to take part in the battle and voices his ideas about war. The irony involved in the resemblance between the Scythian's son and the weakest of his enemies is the most immediate effect of the scene, but Marlowe goes further. Calyphas' view of the nature of war closely resembles that of Mycetes, but unlike the latter's statements, Calyphas' are made to sound like common sense criticism of his father's monomania. It is clear in this scene that Calyphas is no coward--he is the only character in both plays who shows no fear of, or awe for, Tamburlaine. The contrast between his father's mad thirst for blood and his own non-heroic rationalizations of war lends an authority to his statements which would not have been present during the first play when Tamburlaine's ideas were given heroic expression. One of Calyphas' typical statements in the opening scene of Act IV is,

I know, sir, what it is to kill a man;
It works remorse of conscience in me.
I take no pleasure to be murderous,
Nor care for blood when wine will quench my thirst.
(IV.i.27-30)

Such a statement in the first play would have characterized one as a coward. For example, here is a statement of Mycetes in the scene in which he tries to hide his crown:

Accurst be he that first invented war!
They knew not, ah, they knew not, simple men,
How those were hit by pelting cannon shot
Stand staggering like a quivering aspen leaf
Fearing the force of Boreas' boisterous blasts.
(1 Tamburlaine, II.iv.1-5)

The anti-war sentiments are the same; the difference in effect is due partly to rhetoric but more to the context into which each is placed. Prompted by Marlowe to associate Calyphas with Mycetes, the members of the audience of the second play, because of the different effects received from coincident ideas, are further prompted to review and revise part of their reactions to the first play and thereby see Tamburlaine in a different light.

A good example of the way in which Marlowe emphasizes the deterioration of Tamburlaine's imposing ferocity by bringing to bear upon events in Part II the audience's previous knowledge of parallel events in Part I can be seen in the siege of Babylon. The corresponding event in the first play was the siege of Damascus. Both events occur at the same point in their respective plots, Act V, Scene i. Tamburlaine's antagonist in the case of each siege is the governor of the city; both end with the Scythian capturing the city and massacring the entire population. The fifth act in each play opens with the Governor discussing with a group of citizens their chances of survival now that they are in the third day of siege and Tamburlaine is displaying black colors. In Part I the virgins rebuked the Governor of Damascus for not surrendering sooner and saving their lives. The Governor answered:

think our country's care,
Our love of honour, loath to be enthrall'd
To foreign powers and rough imperious yokes,
Would not with too much cowardice or fear,
Before all hope of rescue were denied,
Submit yourselves and us to servitude.

(V.i.34-39)

In Part II the citizens beg the Governor of Babylon to surrender the city up to Tamburlaine, and he, like his counterpart in the earlier

play, refers to the honor of the city:

Villain, respects thou more thy slavish life
Than honour of thy country or thy name?
(V.i.10-11)

It is in this scene that a citizen voices the hope that Tamburlaine will have pity on them if the Governor will send the Christians of Georgia out to beg the Scythian's pardon. These Christians, then, parallel the virgins in Part I for whom the citizens of Damascus had the same hope. There is little doubt that the audience of the second play would be reminded here of the siege of Damascus. The correspondences are so close that once the audience makes the identification it will be expecting the action to continue parallel; consequently, it is the variations which affect the audience with the greatest force. At the siege of Damascus Tamburlaine committed his most brutal act when he murdered in cold blood the delegation of virgins sent to seek his mercy. His reason was that it was the third day of the siege when he spared no one, and his "customs are as peremptory/ As wrathful planets, death, or destiny" (1 Tamburlaine, V.i.64-65). At the siege of Babylon it is made clear that Tamburlaine's customs have fallen into decay when the Governor is offered his life if he surrenders the city. And Marlowe makes sure the audience does not miss the memory of Damascus by having Techelles say, on this softer occasion:

Yield, foolish governor; we offer more
Than ever yet we did to such proud slaves
As durst resist us till our third day's siege.
(2 Tamburlaine, V.i.57-59)

The effect of proof that Tamburlaine's customs are not so peremptory as they had been is that once again the cruel murder of the

virgins is reviewed and the indefensibility of the act receives emphasis in the minds of the audience. But this is not the end of the parallel development. The spectacle of the virgins' deaths in the first play is matched by the shooting onstage of the Governor of Babylon in the second. Following these spectacles in each play is Tamburlaine's order to kill all the inhabitants. At this point in Part I, the Scythian voices what were probably the most memorable lines in the play--the apostrophe to beauty. At the same point in Part II, Tamburlaine again makes a long and spectacular speech (possibly the most spectacular speech in the second play)--the blasphemous challenging of Mahomet out of heaven. The contrast in these two speeches, reflecting as it does the difference in the lover of Part I and the madman of Part II, would not have been lost upon the audience; the effect relies upon the device of bringing to bear upon the second play the audience's remembrance of the first.

The most important and extended use of such repetitions of event are observable in the parallels between what befalls Tamburlaine and Zenocrate on the one hand and Theridamas and Olympia on the other. We have already seen how extensive these parallels are;¹ the impact of each on the audience is shrewdly calculated. [In the main they serve the same function as the other parallels, namely, to tarnish the glory of the Tamburlaine of Part I.] One of the main reasons behind the audience's acceptance of Tamburlaine in the first play was his relationship with Zenocrate. In Theridamas' wooing of Olympia, Marlowe comments anew upon that relationship. Because of the close association of the Scythian

¹See above, pp. 134-136.

and his lieutenant throughout both plays and the absolute identifications of the ideals they represent, the actions of Theridamas comment upon Tamburlaine. Olympia's steady refusal of Theridamas, although that warrior's wooing was patterned exactly upon his leader's wooing of Zenocrate, reflects doubts upon Tamburlaine's qualities as a mate or lover. The purity of the conqueror's love for Zenocrate is questioned when Theridamas, realizing that he will never win Olympia's love, threatens to take her by force:

Nay lady, then, if nothing will prevail,
I'll use some other means to make you yield.
Such is the sudden fury of my love,
I must and will be pleased, and you shall yield.
Come to the tent again.

(IV.ii. 49-53)

This raises in the audience's minds the question, if Zenocrate had not accepted Tamburlaine of her own free will, would not that egoist have acted exactly as did Theridamas? As a matter of fact Olympia's action raises doubts about Zenocrate's quality of loveliness. The reason Theridamas fails in his suit for Olympia's hand is her love and loyalty to her dead husband. Her only wish is that her captor kill her,

Making a passage for my troubled soul,
Which beats against this prison to get out,
And meet my husband and my loving son.

(IV.ii.34-36)

This loyalty to her dead husband sets up an obvious contrast to Zenocrate's comparatively easy change of affections from her betrothed Arabia to Tamburlaine--a clearly reprehensible act as every reader of Measure For Measure knows.

By devising such a structure in which Part II thematically parallels Part I by a system of repetitions of event wherein one event

strongly resembles a previous event, Marlowe achieves not only a close unity between both parts of the play but amplifies their meanings through the reciprocal comments such parallel scenes make upon each other. The excellence of such a structure for the second part of a two-part play was recognized immediately by the other Elizabethan dramatists, for Marlowe's structural technique in his sequel becomes the typical practice in the Elizabethan two-part play.² [To name only the best, we can find evidence of the imitation of Marlowe's practice in Tamburlaine ✓ in Shakespeare's Henry IV, Parts I and II, Marston's Antonio and Mellida and Antonio's Revenge, and Chapman's The Conspiracy and Tragedy of Charles Duke of Byron.]

Certainly, the fact that in creating a new genre Marlowe devised a structural technique which was to remain basically the same throughout the life of the genre is enough in itself to make Tamburlaine, Part II a notable technical achievement in English drama, but its importance does not end there. The most important influence for later English drama contained in Part II is the impetus it gave to the development of the sense of unity deriving from community of theme between events not ✓ causally related. [This kind of unity, which appears in Shakespeare's plays (the two families with unnatural children in *Lear*, for instance) in conjunction with causally related events, constitutes an important Elizabethan contribution to the development of world tragedy.]

²The similarity in structure of Elizabethan two-part plays has occasioned two recent articles: G. K. Hunter, "Henry IV and the Elizabethan Two-Part Play," Review of English Studies, n.s. V (1954), 236-248; and Clifford Leech, "The Two-Part Play. Marlowe and the Early Shakespeare," Shakespeare Jahrbuch, Band 94 (1958), 90-106.

In addition to achieving a tight structural unity between both parts of Tamburlaine, Marlowe establishes in Part II a particular thematic unity without reference to events which happen outside the play. This particular unity is based upon the physical and spiritual deterioration of the mighty Scythian conqueror. As Helen Gardiner has described it from another point of view, the events in the play all exemplify the proposition that, "there is a sort of stubbornness in the stuff of experience which frustrates and resists the human will. The world is not the plaything of the ambitious mind."³

Part of this thematic unity which exists by itself in Part II is a further refinement of the technique of structural parallelism which we have just discussed. Marlowe saw that the effects gained from a close repetition of events from the earlier play could be duplicated by paralleling events within the same play. Although he had made artistic use of repetitive phrases and images in Part I, Marlowe began in Part II to experiment with the use of repetitive actions within the same play in order to achieve mainly through contrast additional meaning or rich implication--a technique which he developed to impressive potency in Faustus and Edward II. Two examples will be sufficient to illustrate Marlowe's beginning experiments with this technique in Part II.

In order to impress upon the audience the cruelty and willful pride involved in Tamburlaine's murder of Calyphas, Marlowe depicts at an earlier point in the action another instance of filicide--Olympia's stabbing of her son. The contrast in these two killings is great.

³"The Second Part of 'Tamburlaine The Great,'" p. 19.

Olympia kills her son out of pity and love and at his request. Her tone is pious and after the deed is done, she prays:

Ah, sacred Mahomet, if this be sin,
Entreat a pardon of the God of heaven,
And purge my soul before it come to thee!
(III.iv.31-33)

Tamburlaine, on the other hand, murders his son out of rage and frustration. His tone is impious. As soon as the deed is done, he threatens Jove for sending him such a son and states that the Olympian has "procured a greater enemy than" the titans.

There are two instances of a character's death which can be ascribed to the anger of God--the death of Sigismund and the death of Tamburlaine. By his handling of the former's death, Marlowe implies the end of the latter. When Sigismund enters wounded following the defeat of his army, he acknowledges his sin and prays that he may be forgiven and not be excluded from divine mercy:

O just and dreadful punisher of sin,
Let the dishonour of the pains I feel
In this my mortal well-deserved wound
End all my penance in my sudden death!
And let this death, wherein to sin I die,
Conceive a second life in endless mercy!
(II.iii.4-9)

When the Turks find Sigismund's body, Marlowe emphasizes that the victors are going to let the birds pick his carcass clean by having Orcanes refer to it twice in twenty-five lines (II.iii.14-15, 38-39). This image of vultures presents itself only one other time in the play, when it is used to associate Tamburlaine's coming death with that of Sigismund's. In the scene following the Scythian's sudden distemper, Marlowe invites the audience to compare Tamburlaine's preparation for death with

that of the Hungarian by having Amasia announce that he plans for the conqueror's body to receive the same treatment as was afforded the "perjur'd Christian":

And that vile caraass, drawn by warlike kings,
The fowls shall eat;

(V.ii.16-17).

If the audience follows its cue, it will take cognizance of the facts that Tamburlaine never realizes his sins; does not accept the justice of his inevitable death, but rather in his madness desires to lay siege to heaven and punish the god that has thus afflicted him; and instead of thinking about a second life after death, lays his hopes for immortality upon his sons' continuing his career of conquest. A Christian audience would have no difficulty in deciding to what place Tamburlaine would ultimately be consigned. Clearly he would not be invested in a higher throne, for his pride was "much too high for this disdainful earth," as he asserts (V.ii.120-122).

✓ [In scenes like these we find the beginnings of that technique of "mirror-scenes"⁴ later perfected by Shakespeare which contribute so much to the fullness and depth of the Shakespearean dramatic experience.]

✓ ⁴The term is Hereward T. Price's. See his "Mirror-Scenes in Shakespeare," Joseph Quincy Adams Memorial Studies (Washington: The Folger Shakespeare Library, 1948), pp. 101-113. Professor Price defines "mirror-scenes" as "loose detachable scenes . . . reflecting in one picture either the main theme or some important aspect of the drama. Others offer some kind of contrast to the general run of the action, making it stand out more prominently by a certain difference of tone or implication. Others again affect the plot by keying up or keying down the suspense" (p. 102).

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VITA

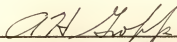
Frank B. Fieler was born on January 8, 1933, in Dayton, Kentucky. He entered Morehead (Ky.) State College in September, 1951, and was graduated in June, 1955, with a B. S. Degree in Business Administration. After spending an additional year at Morehead State studying English, he enrolled in the Graduate School of the University of Florida in September, 1956, and since that date has been pursuing a course of graduate study in English. He took his M. A. Degree in February, 1958.

During the school years 1956-57 and 1957-58, he held a graduate assistantship in the C-3 Department at the University of Florida. For the past two years he has held graduate fellowships.

On August 29, 1956, he married Jean Fair of Morehead, Kentucky. They have one child, a daughter, born March 3, 1960.

This dissertation was prepared under the direction of the chairman of the candidate's supervisory committee and has been approved by all members of that committee. It was submitted to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and to the Graduate Council, and was approved as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

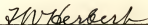
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